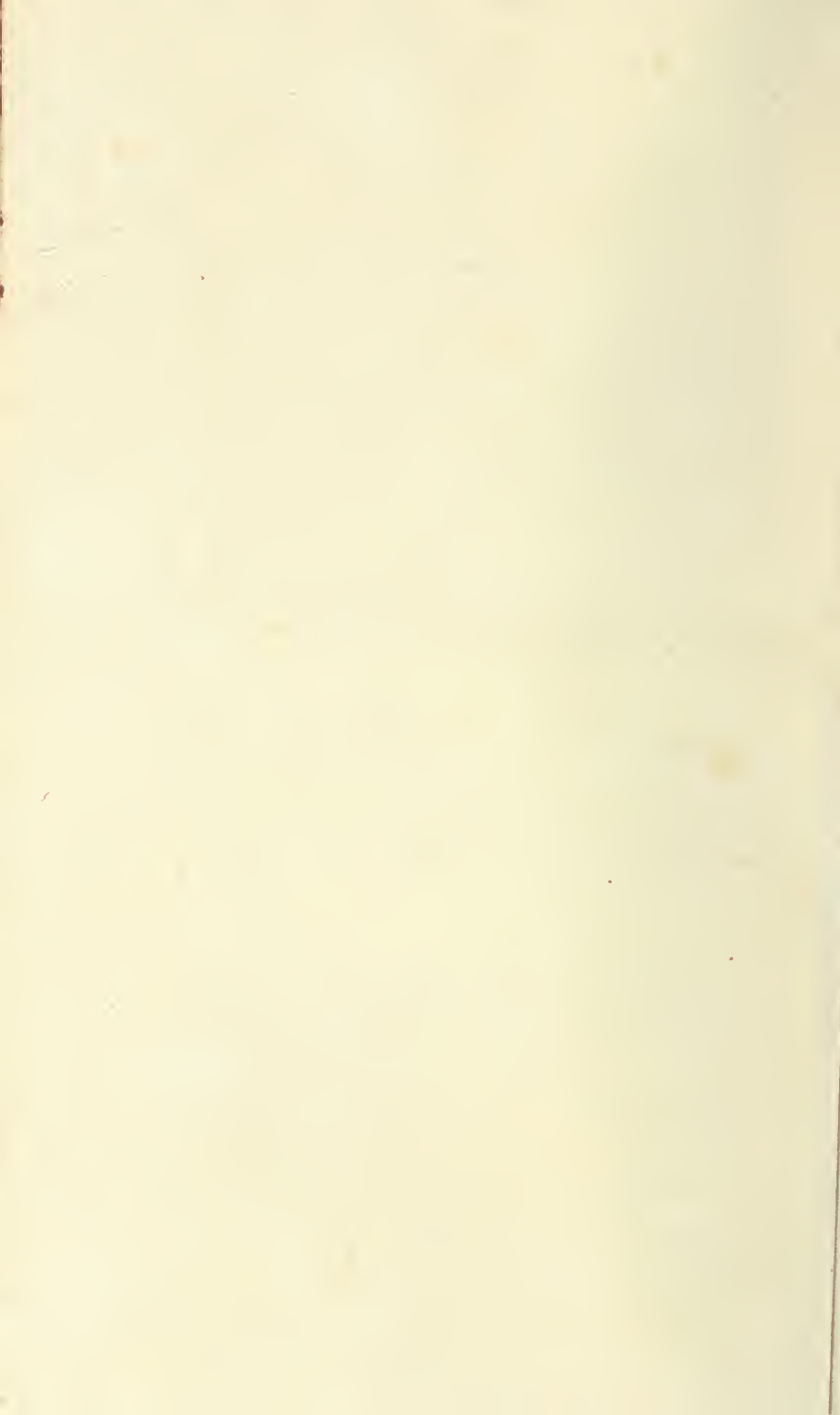




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SACRED PORTRAITURE

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ILLUSTRATIONS,

WITH OTHER POEMS.

BY MRS. JOHN G. GUINNESS.

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P R E F A C E.

IT is with mingled feelings of earnestness for the glory of the Divine Redeemer, and of deference to the public, that this Poetical Essay is submitted to the judgment of the latter, implicitly trusting to their candour and indulgence. The subjects must be interesting to all who value the Sacred Scriptures, and it has been the aim of the Writer to treat them in a way calculated to excite the best feelings of the heart, where these feelings have been produced by grace, and to impress the mind of every reader with a conviction of the great importance of the truths of the Gospel, and thereby to lead, through the Divine Blessing, to the possession of the treasures it contains.

In a poetic point of view, the composition was attended with some difficulty from the exclusion of every fictitious incident, the *facts* of Scripture alone being narrated in the manner it might be supposed probable those facts occurred. Some persons there are, who contending for the *verbal* inspiration of the word of God, disapprove of the least deviation even from its diction; but to these it may be answered, that while the subject matter of that word was undoubtedly communicated by the Holy Spirit influencing the minds of those chosen instruments who exhibited it to

mankind, there appear to be many internal proofs against its being *verbally* inspired, one of which may be here adduced. All who are conversant with Scripture harmonies, will perceive by the parallel portions which are brought together before the reader, that the Evangelists relate the same occurrences with many variations, and that the discourses of our Lord, although in substance the same, are recorded differently with regard to the minutia of language and circumstances respecting them. To instance this, the *one* all-important fact of the Resurrection of our Lord, is related in these particulars variously by all the Evangelists, none of them giving a connected view of the transaction, but each describing several appearances of the risen Saviour and his angelic messengers, leaving the order of the events to be gathered from their united testimony. But indeed the supposition of the *verbal* inspiration would lead into the dilemma of restricting *such* inspiration to the original Hebrew and Greek Scriptures, since it is impossible to transfer even a single thought *literally* from one language into another. The view, therefore, which the Writer would humbly submit is this—that while the entire subject matter of the word of God was supernaturally conveyed to the minds of the sacred Historians, they were left to the exercise of their own judgment as to the language and imagery in which it was to be revealed; and for this reason we observe a great variety in the style and ornamental diction of the several Authors, who were men of very different degrees of intellectual endowments, acquired knowledge, and rank in society; to exemplify this, the figurative ideas of the Prophet Amos, who was one of the herdsmen of Tekoa, naturally vary much from those of Isaiah, who being of the

Royal Family, (and as since deservedly designated the Demosthenes of the Hebrews,) evidences greater dignity of thought, and a style suited to his more lofty associations. The inference, therefore, which may fairly be drawn from this position is, that if the minute circumstances, imagery, and language, in which any Author may clothe the facts of Scripture, neither militate against the truth of God, nor oppose national custom; it is admissible to adorn such facts so as to produce additional interest.

In order to meet the possible charge of plagiarism, the Writer can with truth assert, that not a single idea in this Work has knowingly been borrowed from any Author whatever.

In conclusion, if through the humble instrumentality of these Poems any are led to the perusal of the Inspired Volume, or are enabled to apprehend more clearly the recorded evidences of our Lord's Resurrection, (that important event on which the believer's eternal hopes are suspended) the object for which they were written will have been fully accomplished.

SAUL AND THE WITCH OF ENDOR.

O'er a steep mountain path, at midnight hour

Low clouds in dense and gath'ring masses hung,

The deep-toned thunder rolled with distant lour,

And through the hills in dying echoes rung.

The moon with tearful ray and clouded brow,

Glided in vapoury robe of mourning hue—

Shed a pale glance on rugged rocks below,

And sunk in dull and darkling clouds from view.

Then roared the mountain blast—the light'ning's glare
Fell flashing on a form of giant height,
Who, wrapt in mantle dark, with frantic air
Trode the defile amid the gloom of night.

With anxious eye he viewed the threat'ning lour,
While scarce a gleam pierced the deep shades around—
Sudden in rapid drops the rushing shower
Dashed, echoing on the bare and rocky ground!

Through rolling clouds a passing lustre throws,
High o'er a frowning cave, the glimm'ring beams
That mark where pendant from its oozy brows,
Long trailing foliage in dark drapery streams.

He stops—he gazes on the lonely scene—
Returning moonlight pours her silv'ry ray—
Full on the dripping wreaths of mournful green
Whose lucid drops with pearly brightness play.

Upraised to heaven—his dark and languid eye—

Where manly beauty once in lustre shone—

Seemed to express the deep-felt agony

Of one whom hope had left to weep alone.

But no—he dare not—and with writhing brow

Turned from that sacred glance he once revered,

Rushed through the wat'ry wreaths that drooped below,

And banished heaven from his conscience seared.

A moment passed—ere yet his wand'ring thought

Could mark the scene that met his anguish'd eye,

Or calmly view the wild, terrific spot,

Where nought was heard save the lone night-wind's sigh.

From the high vault of its o'erhanging dome,

A glimm'ring lamp was hung—whose feeble ray

With flick'ring light amid the sable gloom,

Tinged the dark rocks with pale and livid gray.

An altar hewn in rough unsightly stone,
Streamed with the blood of recent victim shed,
And o'er the space full many a scatter'd bone
Marked where the jackal in his wand'rings fed.

Near an expiring flame whose embers cast,
Full on the rugged stones a crimson glare,
And flashed uncertain in the midnight blast,
The sorceress sate reclined with pensive air.

O'er her dark brows where locks of raven dye
Hung loosely wild—the lines of troubled thought
Were deep imprest—while her bewilder'd eye
Showed where contending passions fiercely fought.

On a rude stone was laid a mystic book
Of astrologic tale, and fabled spell ;
There by enchantment's art—with anxious look
She sought the influence dark of demons fell. *

The stranger's footstep sounds upon her ear—

She starts—renews the flame with rapid hand,

On his tall form its falling radiance clear

Displays his sov'reign air of high command.

“ Stranger—at this unhallowed midnight hour,

When storms unusual rack the cleaving sky—

Through the red light'ning's glare and mountain shower,

What spell to this lone cavern brings thee nigh ?

“ Seek'st thou deserted in a world of woes

A lone retreat, in secret there to sigh ;

Or cast a wand'rer forth—would'st thou repose

A transient hour 'till morning gilds the sky ?”

A sudden pang then pierced the stranger's soul,

And o'er his cheek the burning tear-drops fell,

“ Yes—yes—the tempest wild unheard may roll,

But who the storm of deep despair can quell ?

“ Yes—friends have fled—but that were nought—if now
Hope would her taper lend to light my way,
Her smile might then relume my sadden’d brow,
And darkness flee before her cheering ray.

“ Know thou, my soul would lift the secret veil
That hides the world of spirits from our view,
To gaze on one whom death’s dim shades conceal,
One who in happier hours was loved and true !”

Chill terror blanched the sorceress’s pallid cheek,
“ What ! know’st thou not our monarch’s dark decree
Against th’ enchanter’s art—or dost thou seek
My ruin by thy baleful treachery ?”

“ Fear not,” he cried, “ my solemn vow expressed,
Shall be the pledge that none thy secret know ;
For--ah--this lonely--this deserted breast--
Boasts not one partner of its joy or woe !

“ Search then thy page, with unknown magic rite—

The aid of thy familiar spirit crave—

Shed o’er my fate obscure—one beam of light,

And bring me Samuel from the darksome grave.”

The book unclosed—where the slain victim bled

The sorceress laid a burning torch of fire,

Wide o’er the high-arched roof its glances spread,

While secret drugs inflamed the awful pyre.

Then the loud thunder burst the echoing gale,

The light’ning’s blaze flashed fearful through the cave,

And threw its livid glare on phantom’s pale,

That seemed to issue from the silent grave.

“ What dubious forms are these ?” the stranger cried,

“ That flit in vapoury clouds before my view?”

“ These are the gods that on the tempest ride,

Departed shades of Israel great and true.”

Then wide the earth unclosed its yawning breast,

And lo! an aged form in sable pall,^b

With hue unearthly, from his silent rest,

Soft breathed as he arose—the name of Saul!

Then wild the sorceress shrieked—and o'er her frame

Convulsive writhings passed—while her dark brow

Frowned fearful, “Saul! at midnight hour he came

To strike unseen a treacherous deadly blow.”

Moveless the phantom fixed a tranquil eye

On him o'er whom his spirit once could mourn,

And if that spirit now could breathe a sigh,

Thou hapless Saul! would bid those griefs return.

But oh, that glance so deeply fixed—so still

Of mingled censure, and of pitying woe,

Froze through his blood with agonizing chill,

And bade anew the tide of anguish flow.

Dim through the cavern burned the dying flame,
But rays ethereal o'er the phantom played—
While accents soft thrilled through the monarch's frame
As low he bent before the sacred shade.

“ Why from the sweet repose of spirits blest,
Where cloudless heaven beams on the raptured soul,
Where Eden's sunny joys breathe halcyon rest,
And sparkling floods of pleasure ceaseless roll :

“ Why to this scene of more than death-like gloom,
This polar night of sin—which scarce a ray
Illumes—is my reluctant spirit come
From the pure blaze of bright immortal day ?”

“ Oh, happy, envied shade—can'st thou forgive
The rash despair of one whom peace has fled ;
One who by sov'reign power condemned to live,
Weeps o'er each pleasure blighted, lost, and dead.”

Then starting from his suppliant knee, he speaks—

“ Know’st thou that on Gilboa’s lofty brow,
Ere the red morning’s glow th’ horizon streaks,
Th’ embattled host its glittering front will show ?

“ Yes, there the proud Philistine’s muster’d throng
Will dip in deadly hate their murd’rous spear
With echoing clang of shield and helmet strong,
Will sound the warlike charge in Israel’s ear.

“ O, I have sought before the throne on high,
One beam of wisdom’s all inspiring ray—
But ah ! that sov’reign God deigns no reply—
And in judicial clouds obscures my way !^c

“ If then thy happy soul in Eden’s bowers
Can’st feel—can’st pity him who now forlorn,
Once held the conqueror’s and the prophet’s powers—
Unfold the issue of the fearful morn.”

Calmly the Spirit spake—"to mortal eye,

O, Saul ! how glorious were thine early days !

By power supreme—enthroned in majesty

With all th' imperial purple's gilded blaze.

"The conqueror's verdant wreath—the prophet's fire,

Th' attractive charm of youth in early bloom

Taught thee with hopes forbidden to aspire,

And shed a lustre on ambition's plume.

"But—though the ruby's glow—the emerald's light,

The peerless diamond with its varied beam

Adorn thee—yet beyond the heavenly height

A mightier monarch reigns, in power supreme.

"Oh, had'st thou to his righteous sceptre bowed,

And sought thy bliss from truth's celestial streams ;

Then would thy peace as rivers pure have flowed,

And all thy sorrows passed as summer dreams.

“ Ah, if pale sorrow’s wan and death-like form
 Could enter Eden’s groves—my soul would mourn,
Thou once-loved Saul ! the fearful coming storm
 To which no tranquil calm can e’er return !

“ For know, and tremble, that Jehovah’s power
 Which once installed thee prophet, conqueror, king,
In the approaching battle’s awful hour,
 Thy spirit to his judgment bar shall bring.

“ Torn from thine eager grasp—the royal crown
 Of radiant gems, shall shine on David’s brow ;
For thou, rebellious monarch, dared disown
 That law, to which th’ archangels prostrate bow.

“ To-morrow—when the clash of glittering arms
 Shall wake the echoes in Gilboa’s vale,
And fill the sounding hills with loud alarms,
 Then sudden fear shall Israel’s ranks assail.

“ On the red field by frantic conquerors trod,
Thy warlike sons shall meet death’s poisoned dart—
While thou—in bold defiance of thy God
Shalt guide the spear that wounds thy recreant heart !”

While yet the phantom spake his awful doom,
Senseless he fell—ere echo told the sound !
And through th’ enchanter’s cave, a sudden gloom
Of shadowy clouds, poured dark’ning horrors round.

Returning life slow warms each icy limb,
And deep drawn sighs the bosom’s anguish speak,
While his dark eye with baleful sorrow dim
Beholds the early dawn’s first crimson streak !

His followers now who reach the sorceress’ cave,
Plead with their lord to seek a calm repose—
“ What ! see ye not,” he cries, “ the yawning grave
Waits me on Gilboa’s mount, ’mid Israel’s foes ?

Then with a shudd'ring look of deep despair

Towards that dark spot where passed the fleeting shade,
Wildly he flies—the battle's front to dare—
And meet Philistia's host in dread arrayed!

The orb of day retiring, glanced with beam
Of golden light full on the mountain's head—
Where many a warrior lay, and many a stream
Of sanguine hue—flowed o'er the silent dead!

Thou too wast there, O Saul! and by thy side
The broken spear—the plumeless helmet fell!
The glitt'ring corselet in thy life blood dyed—
The ghastly check—death's awful conquest tell!

Oh, had'st thou sought through faith that glorious God,
Whose love can veil the sinner's foulest stain,
Wafted by angels to his blest abode,
Thou *there* had'st joined the bright and ransomed train.

Unhonoured now—'neath Gilead's mountain high

He sleeps within the drear sepulchral cave—

Where the dark foliage waves with mournful sigh

And droops unheeded, o'er his lonely grave!

R U T H.

Now morn with timid blushes drew the veil
That shadowy hung o'er heaven's ethereal blue,
And gliding gradual through th' enamelled plain
Shook from her rosy wing, pure silvery drops
To deck the silken leaf of varied flowers:
Then with her pencil, dipt in orient heaven,
With purple rich, suffused the mountain chain,
And tinged the surface of the waveless lake.
Each pallid star of night, with twinkling beam
Retiring, sunk behind th' expansive vault,

Which soon with added brightness gradual shed
A golden ray o'er all th' awakened scene ;
Now wafts the fragrant breath of orange groves
With perfumed citron through the balmy air.
And bright the rose and starry asphodel
Smiled 'neath the plane trees' high embow'ring shade ;
There, in a grove where twined th' uncultured vine
In festive garlands through the verdant boughs,
A wand'rer sad, with sunk and tearful eye,
Gazes on nature's loveliness, while deep
The pangs of memory strike their poisoned dart,
She—with the fair companions of her way,
Who, in their youth's bright bloom, deplore the loss
Each, of her mate beloved—had journeyed far
Ere twilight pierced the sable vault of night,
Here rests Naomi, and with accents soft
Of tenderness maternal—pensive speaks :
“ O much loved partners of my varying years,
Ye who through gloomy changes of my fate,

With filial love have dried the frequent tear
That sprung from sorrow's fount—here must we part !
But ere o'er wide Judea's desert drear,
Your steps retracing, seek the distant land
Of pagan Moab—to that gracious God
Whose word gave being to yon vast expanse,
And bade the verdant earth cast forth her fair
And flowery treasures—yes, to Zion's God,
My soul in ardent prayer would fain commend
Each circling moment of your future years.
And may that faithful tenderness ye showed
In past lamented years of wedded bliss,
Be richly yours, when ye once more shall wear
The happy bonds of hymeneal love.
For me—alone—a pilgrim through the path
Of desert earth—I'll seek the sacred fane
Where the full glories of Jehovah shine.
Long have I shunned the sacrilegious rite,
And wept o'er altars raised to idol gods,

While my freed soul would fain in worship bow
At that blest shrine—irradiate with the beams
Of truth—from fountains pure of holy light.
But do I part, nor weep ? I dare not trust
My tongue to tell the poignant grief which now
Bursts my swoln heart, and fills my anguish'd eye,
When I would breathe that sorrowing word farewell !”
Orpah—with many a tear and deepfelt sigh
Turned from the vale—and soon the pendant boughs
Of drooping foliage, veiled her less'ning form.
“ Ruth, wherefore now with wan and tearful cheek,
Child of my love, say, dost thou linger here ?
Why clasp me thus ? Orpah thou seest is now
Back to her country, and her gods returned—
Leave me—oh, leave me—add not to the pangs
That tear my suff'ring heart by this delay—
Take then my soul's fond blessing—and farewell !”
“ Parent beloved of him my bosom owned
A dearer self—and can I leave thee thus ?

What—in the autumn of thy days alone—
Unfriended o'er the gloomy path of life
To trace thy weary steps?—that must not be—
Why may not I tread with thee on each thorn?
And seek by anxious tenderness to chase
Each little cloud that hangs upon thy brow?
Cease then to plead—for where thy footsteps stray—
Friend of my youth—*there* will I follow thee—
Thy people shall be mine—*thy* God *my* God—
And on the spot where death shall glaze thine eye
And pale thy cheek—there will thy child expire,
And in one common grave with thee repose!
Hear then my vow—that nought but death's fell power
Shall break the chain that binds thee to this heart."
Now while consoled and calmed, they onward move
Through windings soft of Rephaim's lovely vale,
Th' ascending sun, with wreath of amber rays
Rolls his red chariot o'er the deep blue vault,
While fade the vapours 'neath his burning wheel.

There—as if trac'd on the cerulean sky,
The verdant heights of Bethl'hem met their view ;
Its snowy dwellings where the myrtle dark
Vies with the fairer tint of lofty palm ;
From the sharp ridges of their towering site
With peaceful air, on deep and clust'ring vales
Look down, where rich the fields of mellow corn
Wave in the dazzling fervors of the air.

“How bright,” Naomi cries, “does mem'ry trace
Departed joys—when on the peaceful spot
Where dwelt our vanish'd bliss, we fondly gaze !
Ah, yes ; each image in fair colours drest
Now gaily floats before my fancy's view—
Unreal forms—which melt in liquid air !
From the dread pow'r of an offended God
Here, as thou know'st, pale famine's horror frown'd,
And urged the wedded partner of my fate
To seek the distant plains of heathen Moab—
Plains—where alas ! the fabled Chemosh reigns,

And altars stream to dark Baal-Peor's name !
But there—though smiling fields and vineyards fair
Yielded the fruits that feed the dying frame,
Full oft we languish'd for th' immortal bread
Which nourishes the soul, and 'mid the glare
Of tinsell'd idols sought the living God.
But more than exile's pang my bosom felt,
When the loved partner of my banish'd years
Sever'd by death"—awhile she paus'd, and wept—
“ Left me on earth's drear waste—while the fair plants
I rear'd from early bud to bloom mature—
Mow'd by the awful conqu'ror's deadly scythe—
Bade me beware of sublunary joys—
But see! the blooms of nature strew these hills
With full luxuriance!—yes, my long-lost home,
I fain would greet thy well remember'd charms ;
But ah ! pale penury with icy touch
C'hills—as it seeks to rise—each ardent glow,
And veils the landscape with her meagre form :

But most for thee—sweet Ruth—my bosom mourns”—
With anxious mien, her fair companion sought
To check the sudden murmur e'er it rose.
Her gentle eye upraised to heaven's bright arch
Soft glanc'd on Naomi—with smile resign'd,
“ Fond—but too anxious friend—thou know'st whose hand
Clothes with a verdant robe these wavy hills,
And dyes with varied hues the glowing flowers !
Who paints the rainbow-plumage of the bird,
That with glad note darts through the ambient air,
And seeks his portion from creation's God.
And ah ! will not that gracious hand support
The being he bestows ? doubt not that now
His bounty from earth's riches will afford
Our scanty portion too ! trust in his love—
Hast thou not taught me that Jehovah God
Has found salvation for a guilty world,
And that the emblems of the Jewish fane
Show as in mirror bright—that off'ring pure

Which God's long promis'd grace, in future days
Will realize for those his love will save ?
Know we by faith this truth—and can we doubt
That he who grants the greater will bestow
The meaner blessing ? let us, while we mount
The steep ascent that crowns yon olive grove,
Gaze on th' expanse of nature—while our hearts
Own as our God its providential Lord !”
Far o'er the vale where aromatic flowers
Breath'd their elysian odours—while around
The dark green olive, and wild fig-tree wav'd
With gentle undulations in the breeze—
The sullen waters of th' Asphaltic lay—
Embosom'd in sharp crags, whose forms grotesque
Pil'd in rude heaps, as towers gigantic frown'd—
Or as bold amphitheatres, by hand
Of giant huge—carv'd from the solid rock :
Now 'neath the luminous meridian beam
Like a bright lake of chrysolite they shone,

With golden hues and shades of lucid green—
“There,” with a sigh, the gentle Ruth exclaim’d—
“There we behold that deep and deadly sea,
Beneath whose bitter waters lie the wreck
Of wasted cities, by the fiery stream
Of livid sulphur, heaven’s dread messenger
O’erthrown, and shrouded by the silent wave,
Resting as monument of vengeance just!
But though Jehovah God, thus strikes to earth
The guilty city, and o’erwhelms the proud
And impious sinner in its fearful fall,
Yet love, his dearest attribute, adorns
With pure refulgent light his glorious throne—
But ah! thou’rt weary—rest thee here awhile,
Where the green arch of foliage pendant droops.
Seest thou yon field, whose rich and golden grain
Falls ’neath the shining sickle? let me haste
With willing step to glean the dropping ears
Which fall profuse around, meanwhile resign’d

And pray'rful thou wilt wait my glad return !”
As flies the bird on soft affection's wing
To the sweet tenants of her distant nest,
Swiftly she fled—and from her simple veil
Her ebon locks in full luxuriance fell
O'er her fair neck, while her expressive eye
Of pensive hue, beamed with the impress sweet
Of tenderness and unaffected love.
There, as with modesty reserv'd she shunn'd
To mingle with the rustic slaves, who now
In joyous groups reap'd down the glowing fields ;
Retir'd she trod th' expansive mead, where strew'd
The grain lay scatter'd on earth's verdant lap ;
Now rapid flew the day—the morning shone
And evening ting'd with grey the cloudless sky ;
Sweetly the echoes of the reapers' song
Resounded through the hills—as Ruth renew'd
Her pleasing toil, and bent her graceful form
Low o'er the field—now bright with twinkling drops

Of ev'ning's gems—when lo, a gentle voice
In soft and winning tone salutes her ear !
Sudden she rises, and beholds a form
Of noble manliness—whose air benign
And dignity of eye, bespeaks a mind
Fram'd in no common mould—with accents mild
He thus the timid blushing Ruth address'd :
“ Shun not, fair stranger, one whose bosom owns
With sympathetic throb, the plea of woe ;
Yes—I have marked thy modest loveliness,
And from the partner of thy sorrows, heard
Of that dark cloud whose sad o'ershading gloom
Hung tearful o'er thine early joys, and chill'd
The op'ning bloom that graced each springing flower
On thy bright path of life. Ah, why that tear
That starting dims thy radiant eye, and falls
On thy soft cheek, where the retreating blush
Leaves nought but sorrow's dim and pallid hue.
Trust me, those faded blossoms shall revive,

And with an added lustre strew thy way !
Here in this favour'd region, where the earth,
Rich with heav'n's bounty, sheds profusely forth
From her fair bosom, fragrant herbs and flowers,
And beams with golden waves of clust'ring corn—
Here shall thy shining hours, on joyous wing
Fly in bright circles, till the happier day,
When from earth's transient scene, thy heav'nward flight
To regions of eternal bliss shall bring
Thy disembodied spirit—well I know
Renouncing Moab's idols—thou hast bow'd
In heart to Isra'l's God—and at his shrine
The fragrant incense of thy faithful prayers
Shall soon in od'rous clouds ascend—but see
How bright th' ethereal orb's full lustre pours
In streamy radiance o'er the placid scene !
How the pale flow'rets in the moonlight ray
Wear the reflection of night's chasten'd smile !
And fill the zephyrs with their perfum'd breath !

There the glad reapers cease their daily toil,
And with yon lovely train of maidens haste
To deck the rustic banquet—say, wilt thou
Partake the festive cheer, and make the hour
More joyous by thy presence, while the hymn
Of praises to the source benign of good
Wakes the loud echoes of the circling hills!”
Now on a flow’ry bank—by graceful maids
The snowy cov’ring laid—is richly spread
With varied fruits that fill the rural vase
Of gaily interwoven reeds—which shine
With intermingl’d hues—there the pure grape
In drooping clusters, with the glowing peach,
The bright pomegranate, and the mellow fig,
Adorn the simple feast—no costly wine
In jewell’d vase, flows with abundant stream,
But lucid waters from the glitt’ring fount
Of Bethlehem, fill the rude unpolish’d gourd.
There smile the rosy flowers in garlands twin’d,

And form a fragrant canopy, whose arch
Of breathing odours near the banquet placed
Perfume the night breeze with attractive sweets !
How soft the hymn of gratitude arose
From the bright bower, where Ruth and Naomi,
Awaken'd now by hope's enliv'ning voice
From sorrow's lethargy—responsive sing !
While Boaz, who rejoices in the claim
Of kinsman,* hails in thought the happy hour
When Ruth shall tread with him the mazy path
Of changeful life, join'd by the flow'ry bonds
Of soft affection and hymeneal love !
O, if 'tis sweet with mental eye to dwell
On scenes like these of tranquil happiness,
Where joy perspective seems with brilliant touch
To trace new beaming objects of delight
Unshaded by the deep'ning glooms of woe—
How should the soul by blest Immanuel taught

* Ruth iv.

Through faith's illuminating power behold
That glorious region, where the ties that bind
Shall ne'er dissever, where no flatt'ring hope
Gilds an unreal prospect—where pure love
With angel plumes brightens the radiant scene,
And wafts his wings o'er all th' immortal plains!

NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S DREAM.

The eve had fled, and deep o'ershadowing night
Had filled the palace of the monarch high
With many a radiant lamp, whose glitt'ring light
Rivall'd the beamings of the noon-day sky.

Above the royal couch of broider'd hue,
A shaded lustre hung in chains of gold,
Which shed o'er drap'ries rich of azure blue
A moonlight paleness on each silken fold.

There when the painted pageants of the day,
With all the varied cares of regal state
Were hushed in silence—Babylon's monarch lay
While near his sleeping couch mute guards await.

But scarce had gentle slumbers' gradual sway
Fanned ev'ry sense with soft and downy wing,
When fancy's flight his spirit wrapt away,
And thought inspired, did forms unearthly bring.

He dream'd, and lo, at midnight's awful hour
Near the dark shade of an embow'ring wood,
When clouds with fate portentous seemed to lour,
A form colossal—fix'd—before him stood!

The moon in pale and cloudy robe array'd,
Gleamed on its tow'ring head of massive gold,
Then on its giant breast of silver play'd,
And show'd the brassy limbs of firmest mould.

Each bold and pond'rous limb was strongly based
By feet of iron, mix'd with servile clay,
But here its beamy brightness seem'd defac'd
And mark'd the mould'ring hand of sad decay.

The clouds now gath'ring roll'd with threat'ning lour,
And op'ning wide with livid light'ning flow'd,
When lo ! a stone, hurl'd by unearthly pow'r,
Crush'd the gigantic form with thunder's loud.

Now ceas'd the rolling peal, the flashing light—
And morn with golden smile gleam'd o'er the sky—
Then grew th' expanding stone to heav'n's height,
And stretch'd o'er earth in tow'ring majesty !

With wild and startl'd cry the monarch wakes—
Deep silence in the palace reigns around !
He sleeps no more—and still when morning breaks
Revolves his mystic dream with thoughts profound.

The trumpets sound—the great divan appear
Assembled in the rich and drap'ried hall,
Where springing founts as sparkling crystal clear,
Murm'ring in bright and liquid columns fall.

With look perturb'd great Babylon's monarch rose,
With anxious gesture, yet commanding tone
Summons the magi, on whose word repose
The nations that surround Chaldea's throne.

“ O ye to whom the stores of heav'nly light,
By superhuman skill are richly known :
Recal the fleeting visions of the night,
For now my shadowy dream's from mem'ry flown.”

With suppliant eye they plead, “ dread king unfold
The reveries that met thy wond'ring sight,
And soon in magic glass thou shalt behold
Th' eventful import of thy fancy's flight.”

Amaze—suspicion—flush'd the monarch's brow—

“ Magi, were ye by sacred influence fir'd—

Did ye fate's hidden page of myst'ry know—

Nought would lie veiled before your view inspir'd !”

Swift flies the rapid edict from the throne,

That at the hour of night's returning gloom,

If dream and import be not clearly known,

Then death shall seal the guilty magi's doom.

Soon glimm'ring eve appear'd with envions veil

To shade the features of resplendent day,

And sought her genial glances to conceal

Beneath the dusky folds of vapoury grey.

- And now the parting ray through foliage twin'd,

Illumed the lattice of a chamber lone,

Where with a spirit sadden'd, yet resign'd,

A Hebrew captive pray'd in plaintive tone.

Judea's sorrows drew the deepfelt sigh,
And dimm'd the lustre of his youthful morn,
While hope at distance mock'd his anxious eye,
Or faintly beam'd on Isra'l's fate forlorn.

E'er yet his orison of eve is o'er,
Or day's last solar streak, in twilight fades,
The meteor flashings of red torches pour,
Their fearful gleamings through the dark'ning shades.

Then with stern looks that speak some edict dread,
A martial guard with falchions drawn appears,
Tells him his doom by Babylon's king decreed
Is instant *death*, with all its harrowing fears.

But oh ! though nature dreads th' appalling blow,
Death to his soul has lost its fatal sting—
He feels the presence of his God below,
And rests beneath the almighty guardian wing.

Calmly the heralds of his fate he views,
Then pleads the respite of one short-lived hour,
That wrapt in secret thought his soul may muse,
And seek th' enlight'ning spirit's heav'nly pow'r.

His foes withdrawn awhile—with humble pray'r
His soul flies upward to the mercy seat ;
Like incense pour'd from golden vials there,
That faithful prayer does high heav'n's mercy meet.

Now many a lamp the royal halls illumine,
But Babylon's king rejects the splendid state,
For long has pass'd the midnight hour of doom,
Nor yet return the messengers of fate.

The massy palace gates unfolding wide,
Display at length an arm'd and martial throng,
With eagle glance the anxious monarch eyed
A captive youth, their shining ranks among.

Pale sorrow's snow had blanch'd his blooming cheek,
Nor did youth's lustre light his pensive eye,
But if of Zion, or her God he speak,
That eye—that cheek—glow deep with fervency.

Unaw'd he stands before the kingly throne—
“ Monarch of Babylon—mysterious fate
By art, or magic power, can ne'er be known,
Or by the wisdom of earth's carnal great.

“ No magi learned with dark and mystic rite,
Unseals the volume dread of heaven's decree,
But there's a God, whose soul inspiring light
Can gild the shadows of futurity.

“ The form thou saw'st in thy symbolic dream,
Appear'd that with a prophet's view inspir'd,
A moment thou might'st gaze on time's swift stream,
While yet Jehovah's light thy fancy fir'd.

“ In its proud head of pure and burning gold,^a
Which brightly shone beneath the pale moon's wane,
There taught by Isra'l's God, thou may'st behold
Th' imperial splendors of thy pow'rful reign.

“ And when thy day of regal pride is o'er,
And low on earth's cold bosom thou repose,
The silv'ry breasts which mark inferior power,
Thy high successor's brilliant reign disclose.

“ The brassy limbs an empire strong display,
But one that shines with still decreasing light,
The iron base that seems to mock decay,
Points a fourth kingdom in its pond'rous might.

“ But mark how earth's bright glories fade away,
How tarnish'd now the pure and radiant gold,
The iron feet debas'd by worthless clay,
A strange unnatural union feebly hold.

“ So in that pow’rful state shall faction fell,
And envious conflict with corruption reign,
While direful vice with all its deeds of hell
Shall blot its fairness with polluted stain.

“ Unhewn by earthly hands, a stone thou saw’st
Strike the colossal form with thunders dread,
Till as the chaff by rushing whirlwinds tost
Its strength, its brilliancy, in ashes fled.

“ So that proud state, whose high aspiring eye
Views kings in vassalage beneath its sway—
Struck by heav’n’s hand retributive shall die,
And like *thy dream* from mem’ry pass away.

“ Thou saw’st the stone that smote the massive form
Uprais’d in majesty to heav’n’s high throne,
While as it rose, it still’d the raging storm,
And spread its vastness o’er earth’s circling zone.

“ Thus e’er these transient kingdoms fade away,
Jehovah—Isra’l’s monarch—shall upraise
A powerful realm, whose strength can ne’er decay,
Whose fame shall sound in everlasting lays !

“ As the fierce torrent in its restless course,
Bears the light foam upon its rushing wave—
So time’s vast stream draws with resistless force,
Earth’s hollow splendours, to oblivion’s grave !

But O, the glories of Immanuel’s reign,
Fix’d as the boreal star that gilds the sea,
When suns shall vanish and pale planets wane,
Shall light the ocean of eternity.”

Awe-struck, the monarch fix’d his wond’ring gaze,
Prophetic fire irradiates his soul—
He hails Jehovah’s reign and endless days,
Whose blissful rays shall shine from pole to pole.

Then, at his word, the sacrificial wine
Appears with incense rich in od'rous stream,
To yield the Hebrew prophet rites divine,
Whose spirit glows with more than mortal beam.

With uprais'd eye, and lowly bended knee,
The captive points to heaven's supernal throne—
“ O, thou whose spirit fills immensity,
Whose might creation's glorious frame makes known:

“ Release vain man—the being of an hour,
From slavish chains of base idolatry,
Till his freed soul by faith's inspiring pow'r,
Jehovah great, alone shall worship thee ”

Then rising—to Assyria's king he speaks—
“ Cease thou from man—from gilded idols cease,
The light that now thy slumb'ring spirit wakes,
Reveals thy God—the way to life and peace !”

DEFEAT OF SENNACHERIB.

The purple blush of sunset o'er the sky,
Suffus'd with radiance rich the sacred fane,
And where her golden gates in tow'ring might
And lofty brazen pillars, deep inwrought
With mystic emblems, rear'd their shining front,
There in full glow reflected, played the bright
And redd'ning splendours of the western clouds.
With soul dejected, Israel's monarch trod
Each spacious court, that widely circled round
The hallow'd palace of th' Almighty King.

Slowly ascending, now the massy steps
Of stainless marble, wide th' unfolding gates
Display the temple's glories to his view.
'The sacrifice of eve is o'er, yet still
A few faint wreaths of smoky vapour rise
High from the brazen altar, where the lamb
A spotless offering for sin was slain.
With clear aspiring flame the lamps illumine
The ample lavers rich, and molten sea,
The sculptured flow'rs, and sun-like pavement fair ;
Glance o'er the lucid roof and sparkling beam
As with concentrate rays of thousand stars. °
The perfum'd odours of the incense pure,
Forth from the holy place in grateful streams
Still issued, breathing o'er the solemn scene ;
While on the mingled colouring of the veil
Which hid from view the sacred mercy seat,
Mysterious cherubim embroider'd, shone
With bright vibrations from their glist'ning wings !

Before the brazen altar, bending low
There Israel's monarch lays the impious roll
Stain'd with foul characters, whose blasphemy
Assails the throne and might of heaven's dread King.
“ O, thou great power—whose pavilion high
Of darkling shadow, veils the glorious light
That radiates from thy resplendent throne—
Yet who in bounteous goodness deign'st to dwell
Between the blazing cherubim, whose wings
Of golden fire o'ersshade the mercy seat :
Thou, who with touch creative, did'st call forth
The glowing firmament and teeming earth ;
And with thy sceptre rul'st unnumber'd worlds
That spring from chaos at thy vast command ;
Bow down thine ear Almighty, and with eye
Omniscient, view the dark Satanic lines
Which dare assault the great, the living God.
Yes, Lord ! Assyria's monarchs by fell pow'r
The nations hew with desolating sword,

And dash the boasted idols of the land
Deep in the furnace of devouring flame :
Now therefore, let thy wing of mercy wave
O'er thy below'd Jerusalem, and shade
Thy hallow'd temple from the impious hand
Of heathen monarch, who would blot thy fair,
Thy spotless glories with polluted touch.
Oh, guard from sword of infidel that ark,
The cov'nant of thy changeless love, where shines
In mild effulgence the soft lambent ray,
Symbolic flame of purity, which now
'Neath the bright drap'ry of yon mystic veil
With consecrated splendour pours its light.
Jehovah, Lord of Hosts, upraise thy sword
Of strength almighty, and avenge thy cause
Against the boasted vaunts of heathen foes.
Disperse the lurid cloud of awful gloom
Which threat'ning hangs o'er sad Jerusalem,
And bend thine eye of light beneficent

On Israel's monarch, who desponding bows
Before thy sacrificial altar, where
The spotless lamb displays thy vast design
Of pard'ning love to weak and guilty man."
He ceas'd—and now a distant murm'ring rose
From the reverberating hills, whose might
Circles Jerusalem with massive strength,
The native bulwarks of her holy fane :
Soon from Moriah's height, the monarch's eye
Wanders o'er dark Jehoshaphat's lone vale,
Where gloomy Kedron lies beneath his feet,
While pours the silver flood of moonlight rays
Full o'er the lofty brows of Olivet,
And falls translucent on the cluster'd groves,
Whose shadowy foliage crowns each steep defile.
But hark ! what fearful clang of warlike shield
Rings o'er the vale, and vibrates on the ear
Of silent eve—see, what bright torrent moves
Of flashing spears, which like a starlight stream

Flows in swift radiance down the mountain side,
While gleam the brazen helmets of a host
Unnumbered as the glitt'ring orbs that strew
Th' expansive sable of the midnight sky.
In golden panoply their royal chief
Distinguish'd shines—his cuirass starr'd with gems,
His purple plume wild waving in the breeze,
His daring front and warlike gesture speak
The dauntless soul of an unconquer'd king.
Now in vast columns march the hostile bands,
O'erspread the hills and guard each mountain pass,
With rapid hands a bold encampment raise—
Flank the defiles and plant their banners bright.
The regal tent of broider'd crimson, stands
Full in the midst, while like the snowy peaks
That skirt the sides of lofty Ararat,
The circling camp surrounds their leader high
Invincible, and fearless of the morn.

As flying meteors now from tent to tent
In quick succession blaze the glowing lamps ;
And soon the sounds of martial revelry
Rise on the night-breeze from the joyous host,
Who in glad thought divide the sumptuous prey,
Plunder the hallowed treasury, and deck
Their brows with trophies of their conquer'd foes.
Awhile dejected—Hezekiah views
Assyria's dread battalions—whose proud lance
And massive club, e'er long may vengeful fall
On lone Jerusalem's defenceless head,
And while he breathes an inward pray'r, behold
In simple garb the prophet's messenger
Brings the sweet gleamings of a dawning hope,
Whose heav'nly brightness cheers his gloomy soul.
“ Hear,” cries the prophet, “ from th' eternal bar,
Where Israel's God in awful judgment sits
Th' unchanging fiat of his mighty will.
Against Assyria's monarch thou hast pray'd

The infidel Sennacherib, who here
With impious boasting tempts Jehovah's pow'r,—
Hear then thy answer from th' almighty throne."
Then pointing towards th' innumerable throng
That lay outstretched o'er the wide mountain side :
“ Thus, saith the Lord, hast thou blasphem'd thy God,
Before whose sight the bright wing'd seraphim
Veil their pure eyes, and low adoring bow—
Hast thou defied his pow'r, and in thine heart
Already hewn the tow'ring cedars fair,
That crown the verdant brows of Lebanon,
Cropp'd the rich vine, whose full luxuriant wreath
Climbs o'er the wavy bend of Carmel's hill,
And * dried the rivers of each fort besieg'd
With the proud impress of thy princely foot?
Hast thou not heard that his creative hand
Moulded the mass unformed at nature's birth,
That mass which now an awful mountain tow'rs

* Isa. xxxvii. 25.

Or smiles a fertile valley at his will ?
Has he with ramparts girt each city round,
That thou dismantling all its bulwarks strong,
Should'st lay it level with the wasted earth ?
No—though thine army like the flow'ring herbs
Strewed o'er the green hills in the op'ning spring,
Now gaily flourishes—the beam of heaven,
Shall blast with scorching flame its brilliant bloom.
Thine arrows shall not cleave the yielding air
To strike the favor'd city—nor shall now
The rising trench thy hostile legions guard.
Jehovah—for the glory of his name—
Shall send his warlike angel, who with sword
Of piercing fire shall hover o'er the scene,
And shield his temple with celestial might.”
Scarce had the sounds of mirthful clamour ceas'd,
That loudly echoed in the heathen camp—
Scarce had the wand of sleep with magic pow'r
Wav'd o'er each wearied eye, and hush'd each thought,

When fearful darkness veil'd the languid moon—
The shudd'ring stars died from the gloomy vault—
An adverse angel rode the midnight wind,
And pour'd a sanguine haze o'er all the air !
The purple meteor fill'd with vapoury fire,
Moving in silence through the sleeping camp,
Exhaled terrific death, while o'er the moon
The crimson shadow pass'd with pois'nous flame,
And with'ring nature shrunk beneath its blast !
'Tis o'er ! reviving nature breathes—and now
The sunny splendours of fair morning break—
Her ray of blushing fire illumines the camp,
And streaks with roseate hues each snowy tent—
Sennacherib from dream unquiet wakes,
And summons with high tone his royal guards—
'Tis silence all ! terrific stillness reigns,
As if some dark and fatal magic shed
Its dread enchantment through the spell-bound air.
Wildly he rushes forth—with awe-struck gaze

He sees the bloodless mountain strew'd with pale
And ghastly dead ! the arm'd and warlike ranks
Girt with their martial weapons—cold and still !
The warriors in each tent with glaring eyes,
As if in gaze of horror—lie beneath
That icy death, whose chilling damps bedew
The frowning brow, the wan and sunken cheek !
Shudd'ring he casts a baleful glance to heav'n,
Then on the temple, whose imperial front
And golden glories court the rising sun—
He gazes with dark scowl of vengeful hate,
And with a mournful remnant who amaz'd,
Distracted view the scene of death—ascends
The steep defile, and flies with terror wing'd
As if the sword of judgment still pursues
His guilty steps—the distant Tigris seeks
Where the broad walls of royal Nineveh,
Flanked with colossal tow'rs the foe defies,
And prostrate bows before his idol's shrine.

But while he breathes the impious pray'r, behold
A murd'rous dagger strikes the fatal blow
Home to his guilty soul—and ere the last
Declining ray fades from his dying eyes—
Appall'd he views his miscreant sons who steep
Th' assassin's poniard in his bursting heart,
And with loud shriek of wild despair expires !
Not by the marshall'd host whose war-girt bands
In dread battalia ranged—breathe threat'ning death,
Can mortal pow'r oppose thy mighty sway !
Jehovah ! Lord of those celestial ranks,
Who in bright legions wait with outstretch'd wings,
To bear the olive branch of peace and love,
Or bend the bow of judgment at thy will—
Bind by thy spirit's pow'r a rebel world
In golden chains of love ! as captive's won
'To heav'n's allegiance—may thy panoply
Shine on each warrior who the banner waves,

That bears th' insignia of thy glorious cause!
Till victory enwreath'd with deathless flowers,
Shall shout exulting through the radiant spheres,
And peace in stainless robes shall breathe her calm,
And tranquil bliss o'er all th' eternal scene.

BELSHAZZAR'S FEAST

O'er the high arches of the banquet hall—

Where broider'd drap'ries beam with varied glow,

Pendant in graceful waves from columns tall—

Fair lamps illumine th' illustrious guests below.

Beneath the painted dome, a mimic sky,

The fragrant fount as liquid brilliants clear

Reflected, plays in dazzling mirrors high,

And cools the fervors of the ambient air.

'There, where a silken festoon's shining fold
Forms a wide canopy of lofty height—
Appears an idol sun of sparkling gold,
Irradiate with gems of starry light.

And trac'd by limner's art in rich alcove,
Fair Venus treads the soft and glowing flow'rs
O'ershadow'd by th' expanded wings of Love,
And crown'd with myrtle by the rosy Hours.'

Chaldea's thousand lords in bright array,
Grace with their splendid train th' imperial feast
Where courtly pomp, with nature's blooms display
Their charms, combin'd to tempt th' enchanted guest.

Arrayed in regal robe of Tyrian dye,
With brow encircled by the peerless crown,
Where diamonds fair with blushing rubies vie,
Belshazzar proudly fills th' Assyrian throne.

Now swift in crimson streams the mantling wine
Flows in rich vase by silv'ry vines enwreath'd—
While many a lovely rose which once did shine
In royal bow'rs, its native odours breath'd.

And loud the sacrilegious hymn they raise,
And vaunt of many a fabled hero's name,
Whose warlike deeds they chaunt in sounds of praise,
And pour libations to their idol's fame.

Elate with sudden joy—the impious king
Commands the priests of Isra'l at his word,
The golden vessels of God's house to bring,
Prize of his ancestor's triumphant sword.

O, sacred temple, of celestial fame—
Thy vessels pure that bore the blushing wine,
When on bright altars to Jehovah's name
The hallow'd victim bled with rites divine,

And must they bear the dark polluted stain
Of guilty sacrifice to idols base,
When long in Isra'l's once resplendent fane,
They saw the glories of th' Almighty's face ?

Yes—borne by conquer'd Zion's weeping priests,
The costly vessels grace the royal board,
While with loud shouts Belshazzar's godless guests,
In transports high the free libations pour'd.

Then Chaldea's king uplifts th' empurpled vase,
The beaming sun's transcendant fame t' extol.—
But starts—his eye-balls glare with wild amaze,
And icy horror chills his shudd'ring soul

He gazes on a hand of ghastly hue—
Slow moving 'neath the golden idol's frame,
And tracing in his wrapt and awe-struck view,
Mysterious characters of livid flame !

Hush'd is the sound of mirth and revelry—

Pale looks of terror speak the death-like fear—

Where is the song of pagan chivalry,

Where is the banquet's gay and splendid cheer?

The vase falls trembling from his nerveless hand,

“Yes—yes—some dread—some fatal spell is near—

Summon the magi”—at his high command

Th' astrologers with mystic page appear.

They gaze—but o'er each awful dubious word,

There hangs a shadowy veil of deepest night,

Nor can th' enchanter's art—one gleam afford

To chase the darkness from their mental sight.

Then while the palace rings with loud alarm,

And ev'ry heart beats high with boding fears—

Sudden in rich array—a female form—

With eye of thoughtful dignity appears.

With anxious tone she speaks, "Let not, my Lord,
The lofty courage of thy spirit fail,
Nor let the import of a secret word,
The soul of Asshur's king with dread assail.

In the seclusion of a lonely cell,
Far from the splendid honors of the state
Dwells one, whose pow'r can break th' enchanted spell,
And search the deepest mysteries of fate.

For in thine ancestor's imperial reign,
The spirit of the Gods illumed his soul,
And high exalted in the kingly train,
His art unearthly gained supreme control.

Let Daniel by thy mandate now appear,
Then shall he solve thy doubts by heav'nly pow'r,
Of these dark lines the hidden myst'ry clear,
And give thy spirit to the festive hour."

He comes—full many a year has marked his brow

Since last in Chaldea's regal halls he trod—

Full many a year has shed its passing snow

Since there he spake the praise of Zion's God!

But while within the impious idol fane,

His spirit backward shrinks with holy fear—

He views the livid lines—of import plain—

Where dread denouncements from his God appear.

Then Asshur's monarch speaks—"O if thine eye

Inspir'd by godlike prescience can behold

Through time's long vista—dim futurity—

Read, and these soul-appalling lines unfold.

For well I know thy spirit high can soar

To regions far beyond our mortal clime,

And there the sacred Deities implore

To gift thy mind with wisdom's light sublime.

Now if thine art these secret words unfold,
 'Trac'd by some shadowy messenger of fate,
Adorn'd with jewell'd chain of massive gold,
 'Thou'lt share the glories of th' Assyrian state."

A flash indignant lights the prophet's eye—
 " Let those whose spirit seeks delight supreme,
In gilded wreaths of gay prosperity
 Enjoy with *thee*, their vain and transient beam.

O, thou great monarch—lulled by fortune's spell
 Thy senses sleep beneath its soft control—
While dark idolatry, with influence fell,
 Her shroud of midnight, folds around thy soul.

Assyria's crown that glitters on thy brows,
 Once by the conqueror of Israel borne—
Was heaven's rich gift, whose pow'r alone bestows
 Those bounties which this favoured world adorn.

But when the victor o'er wide regions trod,

And bright the sceptre sparkled in his hand—

Elate with pride his soul defied that God,

Who holds creation 'neath his dread command.

Mark then, how vengeance laid the mighty low,

From heaven Jehovah's swift-wing'd angel flew,

Struck the tiara from his lofty brow,

And o'er his mind a veil of darkness drew.

Nor was that lurid veil of gloom undrawn,

Nor beam'd with thought that mind, to frenzy driv'n,

Till his adoring soul, at reason's dawn,

Confess'd Jehovah, Lord of earth and heav'n.

And thou, Belshazzar—thou his son—hast known

This edict from yon awful court above—

Yet hast thou dar'd defy th' Almighty frown,

And scorn the mercies of his bounteous love.

In thy dark hour of idol revelry,
Thou'st stain'd the vessels of his blest abode,
Which hallow'd once, beneath that sacred eye
Bore pure and sinless off'rings to our God.

Thou—monarch—thou with each unholy guest,
Jehovah's name to idols base hast given,
While the loud echoings of thine impious feast
Pierc'd the expanse, and reach'd offended heav'n!

Then did that shadowy hand of death-like hue,
Trace these pale characters of gleaming flame
To image to thy soul, with pencil true,
How short earth's splendours, and how vain earth's fame.

•

Hear then thy doom in awful words of fire—
Although the costly crown thy brows adorn,
Its dim and fading gems shall soon expire,
And none thy wan and setting sun shall mourn.

Light as the shining foam on ocean tost,
When in the balance of God's righteous law
Thy virtue's weigh'd, its transient ray is lost
While sins remorseless, heav'n's just vengeance draw.

The sceptre which unbroken in thy hand
Held o'er Assyria's realm its vaunted sway—
To other nations by divine command,
In justice to thy crimes shall pass away.

But oh ! ere yet death's dark o'erwhelming flood
Hides from thy view the light of mercy's eye,
Fly to the fount of sacrificial blood,
And cleanse thy soul from stains of deepest dye."

Now on the whisp'ring gale low sounds were heard
Like the slow risings of a gath'ring storm—
Louder they grew—the flash of arms appear'd,
And sudden shrieks of fear spread wild alarm.

Belshazzar starts from reverie of woe—

Summons the royal guard with frantic tone,
But ere his word goes forth th' impetuous foe
Rush to the precincts of the kingly throne.

“ They come—my doom is sealed—the foe—the foe”—

Sudden the sounds of warlike engines roll—
He grasps a sword—but pierc'd by many a blow,
Prostrate he falls, and yields his struggling soul !

Where was thine arm, O Baal ! in that hour

Where were the thunders of thy godlike force,
When fell thy votary beneath the pow'r
Of those who trampled on his ghastly corse ?

How droop the flow'rs that late their sweetness breath'd,

How dim the lamps that beam'd with starry fire,
And where enraptur'd Joy his garlands wreath'd,
Pale Desolation lights her fun'ral pyre !

Around the monarch's tomb, no requiem spoke

Its plaintive sorrow for the spirit fled—

Nought but the wild bird's moan the echoes woke

That sigh'd their hollow dirges o'er the dead.

DEATH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST.

The lofty throne of Judah's haughty king
O'erhung with dazzling canopy—where art
With glowing semblance wove fair nature's flowers
In wreathy gems—with clear reflected light
Of thousand lamps—shines on the festive eve
That celebrates with pomp the monarch's birth.
There the bright rose beams in the ruby's dye,
The blossoms fair of pearl and emerald leaves,
In varied clusters shed their brilliant rays

O'er the proud ruler who in costly state
Crown'd with the jewelled diadem, beholds
With eye exulting the surrounding scene.
Now while he raises high the sparkling cup,
And gazes on the lovely groups who grace
The rich divan, there fair Herodias' charms
Attract his raptur'd sight, while his dark soul
Feels no repenting pang for lawless love
Indulg'd, despite of dread Jehovah's frown—
Or ponders a return to virtue's path :
For when Messiah's herald, as with voice
From heav'n's dread court, in tone of fearless zeal
Reproved the sensual king, whose glitt'ring crown
Had lured the guilty fair one from the arms
Of him who bore a brother's sacred name ;
Heedless of that high power, whose lightest word
Can quick recal the spirit which he gave,
And blast earth's pleasures with his with'ring touch—
Madly he clasp'd the baneful flow'r, and wore

Nearest his heart, its sweet, though pois'nous bloom :
Then by the word of pow'r relentless, doom'd
To the deep solitude of dungeon dark
Th' undaunted messenger of God, who dar'd
Presumptuous to oppose his sov'reign's will,
Here, on this eve, the partner of his crime
And guilty honors, 'neath a shining vest
Of orient gems conceals th' ambitious throb,
The vain and sensual heart, and where a bright
And regal turban beams—there foul design
And impious daring—banish sacred peace.
Yet well the polish fair of courtly grace,
And lavish smile could veil the inmost soul
As pleased she lends an ear to flatt'ry's wile,
And seeks to dazzle by attractive charm.
Scarce had th' entrancing sounds of music rose
And wafted through the air their magic spell,
When as a meteor's golden splendor moves
Swift through the starry vault, a youthful form

Lovely as op'ning rose bud, with light step
Glides thro' the festal hall, and graceful stands
A moment fix'd before the kingly throne.
Her fair and lucid robes are richly strewn
With mimic flowrets, wove in wreathy gold,
Encircled by a zone of orient pearl,
And o'er her turban, many a diamond plume
Shines like the silv'ry play of moonlight waves.
Now with light bound as if on fairy wing
She treads, half flying, o'er the magic round,
And traces to soft music's mellow thrill
Th' enchanting measures of the varied dance.
A rosy garland in her snowy hands
She twines in festoon round her pliant form,
And then with playful air of homage lays
The fragrant off'ring on the sumptuous throne.
Raptured the monarch gazes on the fair,
Then from her prostrate attitude he lifts
The lovely maiden, who with modest blush

Implores some favour from his bounteous hand.
“Ask what thou wilt—yes—half my kingdom’s wealth
Bestow’d, would faintly tell what now I feel—
Or how the lustre of thy youthful charms
And graceful loveliness, has deep impressed
With fascinating pow’r thy monarch’s soul.”
Sparkling with radiant joy, she instant sought
The broider’d couch where bright Herodias sate
In sumptuous dignity, and bending low,
Gently she spake—“Instructed by thy word,
Lov’d author of my being—humbly here
To know thy will—thy child with anxious thought
Submissive waits—say then—what high demand
May I of royal Herod’s bounty ask?
‘The flush of beauty fled Herodias’ cheek—
Her quiv’ring lip some inward conflict spake,
Which sought for utterance—her bright dark eye,
O’er which the gath’ring brow spake fell design,
Flash’d quick the light’ning of revenge—with air

Malignant "from our gracious monarch's hand,
Whose power, whose justice, sway these favored realms,
And doom the miscreant slave to death deserved,
Th' imprison'd prophet's guilty head demand!"
A startled gaze bespeaks the maiden's fear—
Her glowing tint—her joyous glances fade—
Dubious—alarmed—still on Herodias' face
Her eye intent is fix'd—but to that brow
No touching charm, relenting pity gave
That spoke the bosom's tenderness—she shrinks
To plead the boon terrific—till a stern
Commanding look forbids th' opposing thought.
Slowly, and fearfully she traces then
Her step unwilling to the regal throne—
A transient horror chills her bosom there,
While bending she implores the awful boon!
And now o'er Herod's brow, a sudden shade
Of sorrow dims his wild exulting mirth—
Inly he grieves, "are these the pois'nous drugs,"

His secret soul exclaims, "that mingle here
With the rich wine-cup of my festive joy ?
Are these the gloomy clouds, which, dark'ning, pour
Their baleful shadow o'er the beaming light
That gilds the social hour? fain would I now
Withhold the fatal grant my rashness gave—
What, stain the banquet's brightness with the blood
Of one so pure—so spotless—can it be—
But yet the sov'reign word is past—and mark
How in each noble Roman's anxious eye
'The inward thought exprest—compels my soul
To yield—it must be so—he dies—he dies!"
The solemn bell had tolled the midnight hour,
Its echoings rang o'er the high dungeon's arch,
Beneath whose shrouded gloom the prophet sate,
Where the barr'd lattice show'd in streaming rays
Th' effulgent glances of the cloudless moon.
There as he view'd her pensive charms, and trac'd
Her silver footsteps o'er the dark blue sky,

Upward his spirit rose to that bright world
Where reigns th' eternal king, whose glorious Son
Now veil'd in mortal guise, by mighty pow'r
Should raise his kingdom in a rebel state,
And light with ray of pure and holy fire
The dark recesses of this death-like scene—
“ If thy fair beams,” he cried, “ o'er this lone earth
Can shine unsullied by the stains of sin—
If here these twining flow'rs that seek to stray
Through the barr'd trellis of my prison drear,
Waft on the floating breeze their lavish sweets
Untainted by the pois'nous breath of crime ;
In that immortal region where no sin
Defiles its purity—how blest must be
Th' emancipated spirit ! ah ! methinks
I should not sorrow here—though in the full
Meridian of my days—a dungeon deep
Must be my earthly dwelling, where no hope
Tells me of liberty with cheering voice :—

Well—be it so—he who this being gave
Appoints its narrow bounds, and ev'ry sigh
Should turn to ardent praise, that here a lost
And worthless rebel feels a glowing hope
No prison's gloom can chill—no tyrant hand
Efface—a hope, if not of earthly, yet
Of blissful liberty beyond the skies.
Oh! if for human sin, that Lamb of God
Foretold in ancient prophecy, shall die,
And that Jerusalem's red fount shall cleanse
The leprous soul—why should I loathe these chains,
That with their chilly pressure clasp my frame?
No—rather let me fold the icy bonds
Still closer to this heart, since that divine,
That gracious Lord has bid me wear them. Hark!
What echoing sound breaks on the midnight calm,
A distant footstep strikes my ear—it comes
Nearer my prison—and the crimson flash
Of torchlight pours through each dark crevice—what,

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The massy bolt is drawn, and with a sword
Unsheathed appears the guard of Herod ! speak !”
Armed, and with flaming brand, whose wand’ring glare
Streamed o’er the vaulted dungeon’s lone recess
Enter’d the messenger of death, and closed
The massive door—then laid the burning light
In a rude niche, and forth the mandate brings
Of fatal import—“ Read thou here,” he cries,
“ The royal will of Herod—well thou know’st
Our monarch’s word supreme brooks no delay.”
On the dark lines the prophet gaz’d with eye
Intent—then clasp’d in attitude of pray’r
His guiltless hands, and rais’d to heav’n’s high court
A glance appealing from an earthly bar—
“ Yes—in thy sight—thou holy God—my soul
Is deeply ting’d with sin’s defiling stain,
And needs a hallow’d sacrifice to cleanse
Its foul pollution ; but ’gainst mortal pow’rs
Ne’er has my spirit e’en in thought rebell’d—

Would I had testified with deeper zeal
Thy glorious truth, and fear'd still less the frown
Of dying man—would that with ardour pure
As that which glows unchill'd in angel hearts
Here—to a guilty world I had proclaim'd
Thy blest, thy saving mercy, which I feel
As wings of peace, o'ersshade my fainting soul,
And sooth with heav'nly calm each thought perturb'd.
Soldier! this hand which beats with life's warm pulse,
Shall soon lie cold and motionless—yet now
Ere the last throb departs, it points to heav'n—
It bids thee seek forgiveness there, through him
The stainless Lamb of God, whose pitying love
Unfolds the banner of salvation—there
Thy restless spirit shall enjoy a peace,
A sure repose of blessedness—farewell!
I do forgive thee, and would pray my God
In the rich ocean of his boundless grace
To cleanse thy soul polluted"—bending now,

He kneeling fix'd a steadfast gaze on high—
A glow suffus'd his pallid cheek—his eye
Beamed with a light unearthly. “Hark, I hear
The choral songs of angels—loudly *there*
They celebrate the blest Messiah's reign!
O, for a seraph tongue harmonious tun'd
To join the note of rapture.” Scarce had ceased
The last—th' impressive word—when sudden fell
The murd'rous stroke with loud and deadly blow
On his devoted head, which streaming lay
Low on the earth's chill breast—the flaming torch
Gleam'd on the ghastly horrors of the scene,
And shudd'ring echo sighed his dying groan!
The midnight hour has fled—yet still the bright
And glitt'ring banquet with its pompous state
And sensual splendor charms each noble guest;
Salomé who in youth's unclouded dawn
Beheld the vision of her future days
’Till now, one glowing scene of rich delight—

Pale and dejected sate with anxious gaze
Of fearful expectation. “Ah, how soon,”
Her inward thought exclaims, “a mournful blight
Has nipped the rose-bud of my early joys—
How soon the brilliant hopes that flatt’ring smiled
With promis’d pleasure, change to wo and death.”
Sudden the fatal messenger appears—
But ah, what human eye unmov’d can view
His awful burden—borne in charger rich
Stain’d with a crimson tide—the guiltless head
Where the prophetic fire of God had dwelt—
Lay sever’d from the cold and lifeless heart
Once glowing with the spirit’s holy flame!
The lips that oft proclaim’d with fervent zeal
Th’ atoning Lamb of God, now clos’d and still,
While o’er the raven locks a gushing stream
Imbues the livid cheek with sanguine dye!
Her eye averted, and her trembling hands
Palsied by terror, fair Salomé laid

The awful boon at proud Herodias' feet—
Who like the monster of the desert view'd
Her vanquish'd prey with glad exulting thought,
While man's arch enemy in spirit joyed,
And triumph'd at the black and hellish deed.
Now vanishes the night of gloom, and morn
Steals with soft blushes o'er the mountain chain
And breathes a sweetness through the tranquil scene ;
Fair nature smiles unconscious, though her gay
And varied beauties wear the stains of sin.
What mournful train ascends yon winding path,
Bearing the shrouded form of one they lov'd
In sadness tow'rds the monumental cave ?
While the slow measured step, the downcast eye,
Speak the full anguish of the aching breast ?
Yes—thou art fled—but where ?—O raise the eye
That droops with wo, to that empyreal world
Bright with the spirits of the ransom'd dead,
Who by a hand omnipotent are deck'd

With spotless robes, enriched with gems of light,
And fadeless as that pure eternal scene :
There freed from mortal chains—from mortal pangs
He breathes th' extatic air of blissful love,
And bears upon his brow the martyr's crown
Amid the smiles of heaven's seraphic choir.

THE FLIGHT INTO EGYPT.

Beneath the sapphire plain of heav'n serene,
Not e'en one cloud in vapoury brightness sail'd,
And in her silver car, night's pearly queen
Glided majestic through th' ethereal field.

Yet though her ray as lucid diamonds shone,
No scene of loveliness reflects its light ;
It beam'd on drear and arid sands alone,
Which boundless lay along the waste of night.

No flow'ry grove—no perfume-breathing gale
Charms for a while the weary trav'ler's pain,
But shrieks of monsters wild his ears assail,
Which fearless wander through the burning plain.

With patient step along the desert wild,
Watch'd by the friend belov'd who shared her woes,
The virgin mother, with her hallow'd child,
Sought through its loneliness a safe repose.

For loud the cry of death, by Herod's art
Sounded—a murd'rous watchword—through his host,
And many a savage spear had pierc'd the heart
Of infant innocence on Rama's coast.

Ah, then was frequent heard the mournful wail
That speaks a sorrow language ne'er can tell,
While o'er her slaughtered babe, now cold and pale,
The anguish'd mother breath'd a last farewell!

But o'er the infant Saviour's sacred head,
Celestial hands a heav'nly banner wav'd,
Bore him triumphant through surrounding dead,
And from his foes th' adored Messiah saved.

Here—as they onward tread the lonely sands,
No princely guards with martial state attend :
But o'er the babe belov'd, angelic bands
Hover on radiant wings, and watchful bend.

And though no crown with rich and glowing gem
Adorns his royal brow with lustre bright—
The stars entwine in wreathy diadem
To grace *his* head, whose wisdom formed their light.

And can “affliction's” land of error dark
Be for the sacred child a sure abode,
Where earthly wisdom's faint and dying spark
Leads man to worship a material God ?

Where votaries crowd around the pagan shrine,
And purple streams from human victims flow,
Where to the basest idols rites divine
Egypt, dishonouring heaven, can bestow.

Yes—here the babe of Bethleh'm can repose,
And 'neath the eye of light and love remain,
Until Jehovah's fiat call his foes
From royal state to death's resistless reign.

Like some sweet flower that grows amid the wild,
Where nought but noisome weeds their breath exhale,
So on Egyptian soil the heavenly child
Breath'd forth his fragrance on the pois'nous gale.

And long this fair and amaranthine flower
Shone with pure lustre on a barren earth,
Till cropped in bloom mature, by death's fell pow'r,
To grace the scene of its celestial birth.

There its undying glories shall expand

When sparkling suns and systems fade away,

There flourish with the plants of God's right hand,

Amid the splendors of immortal day.

RAISING OF LAZARUS FROM THE DEAD.

Morn o'er the heights of Carmel sweetly gleams ;
And lights on cedar tall and cypress shade,
And with her golden glances brightly beams
On vineyards rich, with clustering fruits arrayed.

Each gilded spire of fair Jerusalem,
Her domes—her temple with majestic brow,
Shine as if wrought with many a polished gem,
And with Aurora's blush reflected glow.

Amid the stillness of an olive grove,
In sacred solitude—the Lord of light
Had breathed his inward orisons of love,
And passed in musings sweet the wakeful night.

When lo! a sudden sound the silence breaks—
An echoing footstep trembles on the gale—
A form appears—whose anxious eye bespeaks
Some sorrow ere he tells his mournful tale.

“Behold, O Lord! he whom thy soul doth love,
Now lies beneath the chastening hand of God—
O haste thee—for each hour doth swiftly move
And with thy presence cheer the sad abode.”

“Not unto death”—replied our gracious Lord—
“This sickness is—but for Jehovah’s praise;
That ages yet unborn may know his word,
And hymn his glory in immortal lays.”

Then to the few whom grace had made his own
With pensive air he spoke, "Lazarus, our friend,
Dies not—but rests in slumbers sweet alone,
A sleep, whose transient reign shall shortly end."

And soon with solemn and impressive eye
He plainly spake—"Yes, Lazarus is no more!
Yet though within death's icy grasp he lie,
That grasp shall loosen by Immanuel's power."

Still many a wearying hour of long delay
He lingered, ere he sought the distant plain—
Then silent led towards Bethany the way,
While anxious thoughts oppressed the doubtful train.

But there, a female form with pallid cheek
And trembling frame, knelt lowly by his side!
Scarce her swoln heart th' expressive words can speak—
"Hadst thou been here—my brother had not died!"

Touched with the pang of sympathetic wo
In broken sighs *his* spirit sought relief—
At length restrained no more—the tear-drops flow,
Which spoke his secret soul's mysterious grief.

With deep and echoing plaints assembling round,
Appeared in union sad—a sorrowing train
To whom he pensive said, “ In what lone ground
“ Does Lazarus lie—released from earthly pain ?”

He ceased—then followed to the mournful scene—
It was a desert spot, with rugged brows
O'erhung with nightshade dark and cypress green
Twining in funeral wreaths their wavy boughs.

There—where the craggy cliff ascended high,
Pale drooping flow'rets strew'd its withered breast,
There—save the lone bird's wild and sudden cry—
No sound disturbed sad nature's tranquil rest.

Before them rose a steep and rocky cave,
With mossy bank, and heather brown o'erspread—
There—'neath its high-arched vault, th' appointed grave,
Was Lazarus sleeping 'mid the silent dead !

A massive stone before the entrance lay—
To guard the darksome precincts of the tomb ;
But soon—at Jesu's word—'tis rolled away,
And shows the twilight of the cavern's gloom !

In mute suspense, as if transfixed to earth,
Each mourning sister pants with breathless fear ;
“ Lazarus ”—aloud the Saviour cries, “ come forth ! ”
The echoing voice dies through the cavern drear !

A moment's pause—and lo ! in grave-clothes bound—
A form moves slowly through the shadowy cave—
With hand, and foot, and visage wrapped around—
Issuing with eye bewildered from the grave !

“Loose him, and let him go!” the mandate spoke,
And sudden health returns with blushing hue—
The eye beams bright with life—death’s bands are broke,
And Lazarus stands before th’ enraptured view!

Thou art the life—the resurrection thou!
He that by faith beholds thy glory here,
Shall see thee, when bright crowns adorn thy brow,
And death lies vanquished ’neath thy conquering spear.

CHRIST'S MIRACLES AT THE LAKE OF GENNESARETH.

Where brightly Cinnereth's blue waters play
With lucid softness round th' expansive shore ;
The vast, unwooded hills, successive rise
And cast their giant shadows o'er the lake,
Contrasting with the faint cerulean hue
That dyes the surface of th' embosomed sea,
The gloomy colouring of their rugged peaks,
Which frown amid the lone and silent scene.
There, with its gentle undulations, shine

The Jordan's mingled streams, now ent'ring where
The lofty heights receding from the shore
Receive their silver current, that with soft
Melodious rippling parts the limpid plain,
And through the gap that breaks its southern mount,
Flows 'neath the shade of wreathy tamarisks,
And drooping willows to th' Asphaltic Sea.
Now like a blazing seraph hover'd midst
Ethereal splendor—the declining sun—
Shedding illumin'd vapours o'er the scene,
And waving on the deep empurpled flood
The broad expansion of his dazzling wing.
There as his brilliant drap'ry lightly touch'd
The gilded outline of the western clouds—
On a vast height where thousands anxious list
With wond'ring ear, the gracious words that fall
In gentle cadence from that heavenly voice,
Which breathes the ardent language of a mind
Inspir'd from sacred wisdom's fount divine;

The flush of radiance from his setting beam
Attracts the Saviour's eye ; with air of soft
Celestial pity, he beholds the group
Who clust'ring o'er the hill had linger'd on
Unwearied, still to hear the tidings blest
Of that high kingdom where Immanuel God
Shall bear th' immortal sceptre, and with rule
Of love unspeakable, display his will
To all th' adoring subjects of his realm.
Then as he gazes with compassion sweet,
And turns to one whose energetic eye
Dwells ceaseless on his Lord, " my soul," he cries,
" With sympathy beholds these scattered sheep
Who wander o'er th' unfertile wilderness
Of earth's drear scene, unguarded by the care,
Unguided by the love of one who owns
A shepherd's tender name ! whence shall we now
Sustain with bread their fainting spirits here,
Which drooping languish on this barren heath ?"

To whom—forgetful of that sov'reign pow'r
Which from the dark profound of chaos pour'd
Oceans of light and being at his word;
Thus Philip spake—"From what exhaustless store
Could we this vast, this thronging group supply,
Which numb'ring full five thousand far have stray'd,
And to thy heav'nly words with earnest ear
Have listen'd since the sun's illumin'd car
Roll'd o'er yon eastern peak, until this hour
When sunk from view behind the western heights
His rosy lustre and mild gleamings fade!
In this wide multitude—one youth alone
A scanty portion offers—but can we
Suffice these numerous souls whose sinking frame
Declares their suffering, with five loaves alone,
And two small fishes from Tiberias lake?
This would but mock their need—bid each depart
The wearying way that leads to his lov'd home,
Ere evening's gloom o'ershades the dark'ning sky."

With smile of sweet benignity, his Lord
Points to the flow'ry turf whose verdure spreads
Its emerald colouring o'er the sloping hill—
And bids them there in social order rang'd
Await his will—then from the favor'd few
Who on their much-loved Master anxious gaze—
Receives the humble portion—and with eye
Rais'd upwards to the azure firmament—
Footstool of great Jehovah's bounteous throne—
Blesses his providential love, who deigns
To visit with his gifts unworthy man.
Now as his condescending hand divides,
And to his wond'ring followers soon imparts
Th' allotted meed—still as from group to group
His loved disciples bear the welcome boon—
Lo ! with increase miraculous they view
The still augmenting store !—in tones of praise
Th' astonished multitude exalt the name
Of him whose wonder-working hand provides,

Thus with creative power, a full repast,
To cheer their fainting spirit—"gather ye
The fragments now which strew the verdant space ;
Remember of the gifts that God bestows,
Ye may not with unthankful spirit lose
The meanest residue." Then swift they place
In rustic vase of simple woven reeds
The refuse of the feast—and soon each eye
Lights with the beaming ray of glad surprise
As with repeated toil, twelve times they fill
The ample vessel! loud hosannas burst
From the enraptured groups who prostrate bend
And hail as prophet, and as monarch high
The lowly Nazarene, who seeks retired
To shun the carnal honors of the world,
And with a lofty spirit slights the pomp
And hollow triumphs of this earthly scene !
Wrapt in deep solitude while evening's robe
With misty folds hung o'er the passes wild,

And drooping touch'd the dull and shadowy lake ;
Soon as each sound in faint vibrations died
On the soft twilight breeze—in musing thought
Beneath the o'erhanging crag, whose rugged brow
Shades the uncultured dell—the Lord of Life
Sought that exalted throne where richly beams
The rays ineffable of light divine :
Which now forsaking for a rebel world
And shrouding with inimitable love
His radiant glories 'neath a fleshly veil,
He had with purpose fix'd on earth's low sphere
Descended to endure—to die—to save.
There—as in secret orisons he bends—
A holy stillness breathes around the scene,
And pure seraphic forms in wonder gaze
And bow their shining heads, and stretch their plumes
To waft his accents on their wings to heaven !
Meanwhile as cleaving through the ruffled wave
Of wide Gennesareth—an humble bark

Steer'd onward towards the shelt'ring shore where lay
Bethsaida's city—vapoury shadows cast
Their streaming mantle o'er the lunar ray—
Across the azure waste of waters ran
Pale streaks of light, with wan and fading hue,
Which sunk in gradual gloom, as murmuring rose
With hollow echoings from the caverned heights
The stormy rushings of an adverse wind.
Fearful the loved disciples gaze around—
And from their bark solicitous behold
'Neath the faint glimmer of the fitting moon,
The billowy swellings of the foaming deep.
Loud with its rolling gust the tempest raged
And dashed the helpless vessel, while with awe
They view a form unknown, whose airy step
Presses th' unyielding bosom of the sea,
And gliding calmly o'er its liquid hills
As on a base of adamant—appears—
Firmly to tread the rough tempestuous flood!

With cry of terror while unawed it moves,
Their eye intent—dwells on the phantom dread—
When lo ! a voice whose gentle harmony
Seems with its magic charm to still the winds—
Bids them allay each restless doubt, and cheers
Their deep despondence with this heavenly truth
That Jesus, in the dark and stormy hour,
And 'midst the clouded glooms of starless night—
Is near—and watchful o'er each cherish'd soul
On whom his love immutable is fix'd !
“ Lord, if 'tis thou,” the wondering Cephas cries,
“ Who thus with might miraculous can sway,
And bind the laws of nature at thy will—
Bid me descend, and on the turgid lake
Traverse—upborne by faith—its wat'ry waste.”
Now as advent'rous o'er the troubled sea
The rash disciple treads a trackless path—
Sudden the whirling tempest drives the bark
Far from his anxious reach—the billows wild

Threaten destruction with terrific swell—
His dizzy thought amid the danger reels,
And soon his falt'ring voice aloud exclaims,
“ Save me—O Lord!—I sink beneath the flood
And perish in this fearful dark abyss.”
“ O thou of little faith”—the Saviour cries—
“ Wherefore though death with awful aspect frowned,
Didst thou in unbelief distrust thy Lord ?”
Then with that gracious hand whose pow'r upholds
The pond'rous spheres in their celestial course,
Yet deigns support with providential love,
The lowliest object through creation's bound—
He raises—he sustains—the feeble frame
Palsied by terror—and ascending now
The rolling bark—with dignity divine
Rebukes the raging tempest—and exclaims
Loud to the rushing waters—“ Peace—be still.”
Lo ! as he speaks, the spell-bound storm is hush'd—
Night's shining vestal drops her sable veil—

The waves subsiding, form a glassy plain,
And o'er the surface of the silvery deep
The bark scarce pressing on its tranquil breast
With lightning's speed darts to Bethsaida's shore !
Upborne by gladsome winds the loud acclaim
Resounds throughout Gennesareth—and now
The wond'ring multitude submissive kneel,
And hail him prophet high of Israel's race
And blest Messiah, glorious son of God.
Then while the lunar radiance streaked the hills,
And quiv'ring glanc'd across the sparkling lake,
Painting with pearly light the vales serene ;
Lo ! in assembled groups with ready haste
They lay before the gracious Saviour's feet
Each fragile form by pain and sickness worn—
Each wild demoniac, whose distracted mien
Speaks the dread influence of Satanic might—
Each hapless being who ne'er hailed the beams
Of bright returning sunlight—with the sad

And mournful mute—who ne'er with cheerful tone
Had breath'd affection's word—or heard the sound
Of tenderness and sympathetic grief!

These as he views, what deep compassion moves
Th' Almighty Guardian, who with pitying love
Extends to ev'ry child of sorrow there

The needed mercy, while his spirit touch'd

With sight of human misery, displays

The joys unfading of eternal bliss,

And points the guilty sinner to that faith,

Jehovah's gift—whose superhuman might

Unfolds the thrice-barred gates of unbelief—

Watch'd with unceasing vigilance by sin

The world—and Satan—gates which oped disclose

Visions of blessedness ineffable;

Where radiant pleasure wreathes eternal flowers,

Where ceaseless praise in odorous perfume

Fills with its incense heaven's empyreal scene

Wafting through Eden's gales Messiah's name.

O Saviour ! thou who healeth ev'ry wound—
Who bindeth up the lacerated heart—
Who with thy purifying touch can cure
The leprous soul, can ope the mental eye,
Unseal the ear, and bid the mind possess'd
With sin's demoniac power, submissive yield—
Thou by thy dove-like spirit canst alone
Breathe an Elysian balm to sooth with peace
The conscience stung by dread desert of sin.
Thou art the bread of life—unfading joy
Flows in augmenting streams to him whose faith
Lives on thy righteousness and dying love—
By thee upborne o'er dark and threat'ning waves
That dash their whirling waters to the sky,
The soul beloved shall pass the fearful bourne
And reach the city of Immanuel King :
'There shine the sumptuous streets of lucid gold—
The moonlight hues from gates of spotless pearl—
'There spring th' immortal trees, whose blossoms fair

Are nourish'd by that clear resplendent flood
Which from the sapphire throne of Deity
Dispenses bliss in rich unfailing springs
O'er all th' illimitable plains of heaven.

THE MARRIAGE AT CANA IN GALILEE.

Th' illumin'd splendor of the bridal hall
Shone full on brilliant wreaths of blushing flow'rs,
Which gaily twined around the pillars tall,
And vied in charm with nature's summer bow'rs.

And many a form of loveliness was there—
And many a diamond shone with rainbow light
On robes of wavy gold, whose tissue fair
Beam'd like the stars that gem the veil of night.

Then soft the silver tones of music rose,
While swift the hours flew by on dazzling wing,
And soon the ruby wine abundant flows,
And perfumes rich their balmy odours fling.

But *one* amid the throng, with brow serene,
With dignity of air and eye benign—
Deigned not, though mingling in the festive scene,
To offer vows at pleasure's gilded shrine.

While round the Syren flung her chaplets gay,
Inly *he* burned with ardent, holy zeal,
Jehovah's name and glory to display,
And work on earth his heav'nly father's will.

Now long in vases rich the purple wine
Had sparkled at the lip of many a guest,
Till passing hours beheld its quick decline,
And none remained to grace the sumptuous feast. ⁶

Warned of their need by her whose anxious love
Unceasing shone through many a changing moon,
He, in whom life, and thought, and being move,
Disdained not here to grant the humble boon.

Now as he viewed the festal hall within,
Those vessels fair which bore the lustral stream,
To cleanse the guilty hands defil'd by sin,
And cheer the soul with mercy's glad'ning beam :

With mild majestic air, the heav'nly guest
Commands that straight each ample vase they fill,
Then bear unto the ruler of the feast—
With prompt obedience they perform his will.

And now the shining lymph as silver flows,
Pure and translucent as Siloam's stream—
But sudden—as the morning cloud it glows
When deeply crimson'd by the rising beam !

Creator !—here thy peerless glories shine,
Obedient nature moulded by thy word
Needs but the mandate of that word divine
Her stores of countless riches to afford.

When Joshua led the hosts of Isra'l on,
And Aj'lon's valley rang beneath their tread,
The wreath of victory was well-nigh gone,
For closing eve her fading gleam had shed.

But soon thou didst command the burning Sun,
Whose fiery steeds sped onward to the west,
To rein their ardour, till that wreath was won,
And bid his blazing car on Gibeon rest.

And when the fair moon hasten'd to conceal
Her timid charms beneath the veil of night,
Thy word recalling, bade her still reveal
O'er Aj'lon's warlike scene, her mellow light.

And O, if voiceless nature owns thy pow'r,
And pays submissive homage to thy will,
With what deep fervency should man adore,
And with what zeal thy high command fulfil.

O Saviour ! if thy spirit-piercing ray
Beam on the lone obscure that clouds the heart,
Then the dark reign of sin shall pass away,
And error's wild chaotic glooms depart.

THE TRANSFIGURATION.

'The amber ray of noon refulgent shone—

Judea's valleys smiled beneath its light—

'The shadows lessen'd by the tow'ring sun

Seem'd but as points beneath the mountain's height.

'The gleaming waters of the rapid fall,

Rose high in show'ry spray of liquid gold,

'Then gently murm'ring through the forest tall,

Laved the dark foliage with their surface cold.

There in a fertile plain where amaranths shed
Their purple lustre 'neath the glist'ning grove—
In converse blest each moment swiftly fled,
While Jesus dwelt on his eternal love.

Three favoured followers list with anxious ear,
And look expressive of their inmost soul,
As oft he brings far distant glories near,
When time with restless wheel shall cease to roll.

Ascending now the verdant mountain's side,
Where orient blooms display'd their sunny smile,
The Saviour paused—for there unfolding wide
A valley opened in the green defile.

Long streaming garlands of wild nature's flow'rs,
With artless grace across the banks were flung,
Which gaily form'd fresh interwoven bow'rs,
Whose foliage in fantastic drap'ry hung.

A silence there angelic seem'd to dwell,

They breath'd in thought the atmosphere of heav'n ;

A feeling deep—which words but faintly tell—

Of sacred peace was to each spirit giv'n.

With eye intent they still their Lord behold,

Fix'd on his face with wrapt incessant gaze,

When lo ! it radiates like the dazzling gold

That paints the sun in his meridian blaze !

And o'er his robes resplendent show'rs of light

Fall like the silv'ry snow on Alpine brow--

While all the Godhead in his fulness bright,

Beams from his eyes with rich effusive glow !

Now gliding from the sky's soft azure veil,

Two forms celestial part the trackless air,

Then press with silent step the flow'ry dale,

And commune sweetly with their Saviour there.

The one in robes of priestly splendor drest,
With mitre fair inwrought with living gold,
Bears the " memorial " on his mystic vest,
And in each hand does God's high mandates hold.

He who the title great of Prophet claims,
Speaks with an earnest eye, a zealous fire
Of that blest time when hearts as sacred flames
On incense altars shall to heav'n aspire :

When Jesus, antitype of ancient rite,
Shall suffer at the dread appointed hour,
And rising to a throne of sov'reign might,
Dispense his Spirit with omnific pow'r.

There, while amaz'd th' entranc'd disciples gaze,
They plead with humble pray'r and suppliant knee,
" Lord, let us here three tabernacles raise
That these thy favoured friends may dwell with thee."

Then instant fell a pure illumined cloud
That hid the scene sublime with brilliant glare,
While tones supernal spake in accents loud,
“Hear my loved Son eternal truth declare!”

The voice was pass'd, yet o'er their senses shed
A sudden thrill of deep o'erwhelming awe—
But as it ceased th' enchanting vision fled,
And veiled in human guise their Lord they saw!

O sweet, though transient view of holy light,
Like beams that through a darksome vapour shine
Which to their favor'd souls with glories bright
Displayed the Saviour's majesty divine!

Bear then ye heralds—his immortal name
To lands by error's wand'ring footsteps trod,
Till the imperial standard of his fame
Unfurled—proclaims the vict'ries of our God!

THE RESURRECTION AND ASCENSION OF OUR LORD.

Darkness with gloomy wings still hover'd o'er
Th' horizon wide—her sable plumage spread,
Conceal'd the lunar beams with shade obscure ;
And while the war-clad soldier's frequent step
Traced the lone path before the rocky cave,
Where silently Messiah's relics slept—
Sudden th' o'erhanging clouds in thunder burst
That pealed reverberating through the air—
A hollow trembling shook the cleaving earth,

And rent the mountains with terrific shock !
Awe-struck, the Roman guards with upward gaze
Behold the lurid vault where flows a glare
Of livid fire, and opes the turbid sky !
With rapid flight descends an angel form,
From whose pure wings and robes of stainless snow,
Bright streams of wavy lustre pour their light,
While from his eyes, as fiery arrows sharp
Red light'ning darts with fearful flashes round,
And gilds with awful ray the Saviour's tomb !
On the huge stone whose pond'rous mass conceals
The deep recess, one hand of might he lays—
Backward it rolls—and seized with panic dread
The warriors who had trod the blood-stained field
And dared the terrors of th' embattled foe
Low on the reeling earth now senseless fall !
Then gaped the yawning graves—the sainted dead
Forth from their sepulchres in spotless garb
Entered the holy city, and when wild

Streamed the electric blaze, were seen to glide
Swift through the plains and o'er the mountain pass
While loud the bursting tempest raged around.
The storm is o'er and twilight's gentle ray—
Fair herald of the rosy blush of morn—
Scarce streaks th' enamelled verdure of the hill,
Or lights the surface of the pallid stream.
The clustered foliage of fair Olivet
Now gradual rises from the dull profound,
And o'er the vales, a dim and vapoury mist
Waves its grey mantle 'neath the clouded sky.
With mournful steps a white veiled group advance,
Their air afflicted speaks the feeling soul
Surcharged with sorrow—while the burning tear
Frequent bedews the drap'ry that conceals
The wo-worn cheek—along a winding path
That leads to Calv'ry's lone and death-like mount,
They bear the fragrant aromatics—there
T' embalm, in grateful memory, the remains

Of him, beside whose cross with bursting heart,
Yet silent anguish—they had knelt and wept,
And when full many a timid recreant fled,
Their gracious Lord in his expiring hour,
Unawed *they* followed to the harrowing scene :
There while the infidel revil'd and scorn'd,
They gazed despairing—on his suff'ring frame,
And met with sad response each dying sigh.
There—though the awful darkness that o'erspread
With black terrific veil—the glowing orb
That sick'ning viewed the dread mysterious hour
Which doom'd the Source of Life, to death of Shame—
Still, still they linger'd by the blood-stain'd cross,
'Till the pale form in death-shroud wrapt, was laid
In the chill bosom of its gloomy grave.
Now in the dawning twilight, ere the ray
Of smiling morn had mock'd their pensive grief
With deep solicitude they sought the spot
That gave sepulture to his relics lov'd.

'Twas stillness round, save where the passing bird
Whose painted plumage beamed with orient dyes
Waved in the foliage thick, his flutt'ring wing :
While the cold dewy flow'rs that gemmed the earth,
Mov'd not a leaflet in the sleeping breeze
To break the lonely silence of the grove.
A solemn awe stole o'er each sense as now
Beneath the pensile cypress boughs they view
The final dwelling of th' illustrious dead.
They start—they tremble—see the massive stone
Already roll'd away—the Roman guards
Who watch'd the fast seal'd sepulchre are fled,
With quick'ning steps they pass the portal dark—
While the first gleams of the relucient rays
That deck with diadem the brow of morn
Faintly displays its dim recess—but ah !
Their eye intent, through the abode of death
Seeks vainly their belov'd, their hallow'd Lord.
Then while renew'd the tide of grief returns—

She who once laved with many a bitter tear
His sacred feet—and with the wavy hair
Which fell luxuriant o'er her bended form,
Had dried the stains of sorrow, while her soul
Touched by the Spirit's pow'r, amidst the pangs
Of conscious guilt, beheld a dawning hope
Of pardon as that eye beneficent
Beam'd with the light of mercy—she with haste
Fled from the sepulchre, and sought the spot
Where the disciples of her buried Lord
Their weeping vigils kept. With throbbing heart
And falt'ring tongue she tells her bosom's fears,
And wakes the sympathetic plaint of wo.
Meanwhile as ling'ring still with anxious thought
The female mourners tread the lonely cave—
A lambent flame plays o'er the dusky scene—
And lo! a form benign with shining robes
Pure as the humid cloud, whose fleecy light
Reposes on the deep cerulean vault ;

Beholds with eye seraphic the pale group
Who frighted turn from his unearthly gaze.
“ Fear not,” he cries with voice whose thrilling tone
Breathes like the music of celestial spheres,
“ Ye seek the mortal frame of him who died
On that dread cross, stained with the crimson blood
Which from the fountain of his sinless heart
Flowed for a guilty world—ah, weep no more—
He sleeps not in the cold deserted grave
’Neath the drear shroud that wraps the icy form,
He sleeps not here—where echo’s plaint repeats
’The voice of sorrow—no—ere yon bright sun
Shed his first twilight glimpse o’er heav’n’s blue arch,
With pow’r supreme he burst the chains of death
And rose, eternal victor, from the tomb.
Come and behold, where for a transient hour
’The Lord of angels and of mortals lay !”
With dubious heart they pierce the cavern’s gloom,
And reach the spot where once the sacred dead

Reposed in awful solitude—perplexed—
And thoughtful while they view the vacant grave,
Increasing floods of starry brightness flows
From the fair drap'ry of two angel forms
Who fill with crystal light the funeral cave—
“ Why in the darkling chambers of the dead
Seek ye for him who through creation vast
Breathes ceaseless streams of vivifying life ?
He rests not here—but raised by sov'reign might
Lives through unfading years, the source of bliss.
Have ye forgot those sad and solemn words
Spoke by the man of sorrows, while despised,
Rejected, he sojourned on earth's wild waste ?
That stricken by Jehovah's sword, his soul
Should bear the fearful weight of human guilt,
And offered on the ignominious cross
By sinner's hands remorseless—should atone
For crimes of deepest dye ? have ye forgot
That ere the third revolving sun should beam

With golden fervours through th' illumined air ;
His lifeless form waked by supernal might
Should cast the bonds of Hades, and arise
A conqu'ror o'er the fell terrific powers
Of Death—the grave, and sin ?” Thus sweetly spake
The angel visitant ; and now the fair
And heavenly partner of his earthward flight
With soothing voice addressed the wond’ring group :
“ Seek ye in haste Messiah’s sorrowing friends
Impart these joyful tidings and console
The drooping penitent who groans beneath
Th’ oppressive burden of his conscious guilt,
Yes—bid the mourning Cephas now rejoice
That Jesus—Intercessor—Saviour lives,
And heals with gentle balm the deadly wounds
Which rankle in th’ unpardoned sinner’s heart.
Far in the mountain heights of Galilee
Assembled shall ye view your living Lord,
And at his feet adoring homage pay.”

Prompt at the angel's word they leave the tomb,
And soon the twining foliage veiled each form,
And echo ceased to whisper to the wind
Their fast retreating steps. Unconscious now
The loved disciple treads the mountain path,
And followed by the hapless penitent
Who once disowned the glorious name of him
Whose grave he sorrowing seeks—swiftly descends
Where the dark boughs an arch funereal raise
To shade the melancholy haunt of death.
They gaze—but solitude and silence there
Reply not to their soul's enquiring thought.
Within the dull obscure, nought meets their eye
Save the pale shroud that wrapt his hallow'd form
In folded order laid—pond'ring they leave
The lonely scene, and pensive seek their home.
But Mary lingers still—her full swoln heart
Now seeks relief in many a-streaming tear,
While on the air with trembling notes resound

Her frequent sighs that murmur through the grove.
Still as she wept, and at the portal hung
With eye desponding fix'd—behold a gleam
Effusive flows from two seraphic forms
Who in soft accents of compassion seek
To cheer the mourner's grief—" Ah ! wherefore fall
Those tears of wo, and why with sadden'd gaze
Still dost thou linger near death's dark abode,
And wake with plaintive cries the slumbering gale ?"
" Yes, I must weep—these tears but feebly speak
The deep-felt anguish of my aching heart,
Since my loved Lord is numbered with the dead
And now by cruel foes, denied a grave.
Here, in this gloomy sepulchre he lay—
But now his sacred form torn from its shroud"—
She ceases—for a gentle footstep falls
Near the embowered recess—a stranger there
With pitying tone demands the secret cause
That wakes the inward sorrows of her soul ?

“ Ah, if 'tis thou,” she cries, “ who tend these flowers
Which breathe their fragrance round the cheerless tomb !
If on that fatal eve thou saw'st him laid
A cold and lifeless corse in this drear spot,
If thou hast borne him hence—ah, tell me where,
Where hast thou laid him ? let me seek his grave
And pour the plaints of gratitude and wo
O'er the sad relics of that gracious Lord,
Who on the cross a bleeding victim died.”
Ere the last falt'ring word is faintly breathed,
Sudden an accent sweet salutes her ear
Whose cadence penetrates her thrilling frame ;
She gazes with intent, with earnest eye,
“ 'Tis he—that voice—that look—he lives—he lives.”
Raptured she kneels, and wildly clasps his robe,
While mingled tears of joy of wonder flow
Forth from her beaming eyes which seek to trace
Each well known lincament.—“ Detain me not,”
With air benign he cries, “ I rise not yet

In glory to my heavenly Father's throne.
Say to my anxious brethren, I ascend
Triumphant intercessor to *my* God,
Who as *your* God and Father dwells on high,
Exhaustless source of beatific love."

Still would her willing ear have heard those sounds,
Which reached her inmost soul and like the ray
Of gilded morn dispelled the dismal clouds
Whose gloomy shadows o'er her senses hung ;
But winged with ardour and with joyful hope,
She flew submissive at her Saviour's word
To bear the tidings of celestial peace
Where with emotion deep his followers wept.
Now o'er the heights of Terebintha's vale,
The fervid glances of the cloudless sun
Enrich with glowing light the craggy hills,
Illume each barren mount, whose sides disclose
The arid bed where once a torrent rolled,
And mark where shapeless rocks disrupted lie

Rudely suspended o'er the path which winds
Through the rough scenery of the dreary dell.
There on the flinty stones which sparkling catch
The ardent beams that scorch the withering flowers,
Two pensive travellers tread with measured step :
Their tone desponding and their thoughtful brow
Speak the afflicted spirit as they wend
Towards Emmaus their lone and weary way.
Scarce had they reached a fairer scene where hung
The verdant drapery of the balmy fir,
Wreathing with charm uncultured the wild hills
That rise successive to the vaulted skies ;
When lo! a stranger as they onward move
Traces with them the rugged path—his eye
Of dignity and condescending grace,
Fixed in soft sympathy, beholds their grief :
While thus with voice by sweet compassion tuned,
He breaks the silence sad—" What mournful theme
Invites the ready sorrows of your souls

While ye in melancholy union stray ?”
“ And art thou then a stranger to the deeds
Of wonder and of wo, which late have filled
The Jewish capital with dread alarm ?
And was the Nazarene unknown to thee ?
Jesus—that glorious prophet—on whose head
The dew of heaven in rich effulgence poured
Shone in each mighty act—each potent word
That shed a splendor o’er his bright career :
While on his form a godlike impress stamped
Which beamed through poverty, and station mean,
Cheered his devoted followers with the hope
That he by power miraculous should break
The foreign chain which binds the conquered neck
Of hapless Israel. But with heartfelt grief
Scarce can I speak the fatal issue—seized
By wicked hands—the godless Sanhedrim
Condemned the guiltless to a death of shame,
And nailed his sinless body to the tree

Where torn by fearful suff'rings he expired !
Forgive me if I weep—thou too would'st mourn
Hadst thou but known that loved, that gracious Lord,
But ah ! my tears avail not—twice the sun
Has lit the heavenly concave since that deed
Of darkness and of horror stained the earth !
And yet though passing rumours reached our ears,
That angel visitants at morn revealed
His resurrection to the female train
Of mourners at the sacred sepulchre—
Him we beheld not, and our drooping hearts
Since he has fled—seek vainly in this wild
And desert world—a gleam of smiling hope
To cheer the deep despondence of our souls.”
With look reproachful and with rising sigh
The stranger gently spake—“ O ye unwise
And slow of spirit to believe those truths
Which by Jehovah's holy influence fired,
Each prophet of your land with ardour sung ;

Truths, which your ancient lawgiver inspired,
By rites symbolic preached to fallen man !
Ought not Messiah through the suff'rings dread
Foretold by voice from heaven, thus to pass
Th' ordeal dark of death, raised then with power
To re-assume his glorious robes of light
And fill the mediatorial throne on high ?”
Then with a solemn tone, a wisdom pure
And superhuman, he unveiled those truths
Which brightly shone beneath the secret type
And shadowy emblem of th' Almighty's law.
While as he spake, his words like balmy dew
Distilled on arid lands, with gentle sway
Consoled their thirsty souls, which eager list
The wond'rous doctrines of their guide unknown,
And wake to hope's exhilarating beam.
And now the sun as dazzling monarch robed
Lowered his sceptre in the flaming sky—
Swiftly fair evening came with fragrant breath,

Perfumed with aroma along the plain
And waved the drooping verdure of the grove.
Still on each little word the stranger spoke,
List'ning they hung with ear intent, as now
They reach the spot secluded where arose
The rustic dwellings of fair Emmaus.
There as they paused—th' unknown with hastened step
Passed onward from their dwelling—'till o'ercome
He yielding graced their hospitable dome :
Where soon the rural feast with anxious care
Is spread by hands officious—unadorned
Their simple viands deck the humble board,
While with an upward glance of grateful praise
They own the fountain blest of earthly good.
The stranger now with mild impressive eye
And air of heavenly majesty divides
The mystic bread—with startled cry they gaze,
A sudden light shines on their souls—" 'tis he."
A joy extatic fills their throbbing breast—

But while they raptured view the well-known form
Which beams with halo of celestial rays,
Wrapt from their sight, it vanishes in air !
“ Did not our hearts with deep-felt ardour burn
While as we journeyed, he unveiled with clear
Convincing wisdom, those mysterious truths
Disclosed in dark prophetic vision oft
To blest, to favored Israel—let us haste
To pour into the suff’ring hearts of those
Who weep their buried Lord—the gentle balm
Of consolation sweet—transporting thought—
He lives—he lives !—O let us swiftly now
Retrace our steps guarded by gracious love,
And guided by the silver lamp of night,
And seek his followers who deploring keep
Their sorrowing vigils—see, the glitt’ring ray
Pierces the dusky shade that evening drew
O’er the aerial dome of glowing clouds,
Hope now re-animates the saddened soul

And wings us on our way." Unheeding then
The silent hour—the lone and wearying path
They tread the rocky vale of Terebinth,
And reach Judea's capital: but ah!
While joyful they unfold their rapturous tale,
Th' assembled train of sad disciples there
Who now secluded at the midnight hour,
In secret breathe their holy orisons—
Feel the dark power of unbelief pervade
Their wav'ring hearts, and bind with icy chain
Their stubborn will—but while they coldly doubt—
Sudden they view unveiled their risen Lord,
Who with soft air of recognition mild
Bends a complacent eye, on those who now
Turn fearful with wan cheek and shudd'ring frame
As from terrific phantom.—"Fear ye not
But with sweet peace compose your troubled souls,
Why look ye now with wild solicitude
As though some dread delusion met your sight—

Behold these hands—these feet—once scarred with wounds,
Which bear their fatal impress—gaze ye now
Here on this side pierced 'till the crimson stream
Flowed from this anguished heart, ere life's last sigh
Breathed from these cold expiring lips—and say—
Say while ye touch this frame material—glows
An airy shadow with the warmth of life,
Or with resistance meets the hand that tries
Its solid structure?" Joy and shame unite
With mixed emotion in each gladden'd heart,
While their divine, their living Saviour now
Partakes their simple viands, and with tone
Of tenderness and free-forgiving love
Unfolds celestial truth, whose dawning light
With animating power dispels their fears,
And breathes enchantment o'er each tranquil soul.
But one, who absent at that joyful hour
Soon hears the wond'rous tale, now dubious cries :
Rely not on these visionary thoughts ;

Nor deem realities the hollow shapes
That float before disordered fancy's eye ;
Ah, no ! my soul rejects th' illusive dream
For if I see not on those sacred hands
The awful print that fixed them to the cross,
And feel not, warm with life, that throbbing side
Once lacerated by the savage Roman's spear :
Still, still in doubt, desponding still, my heart
Lends not its faith to phantoms light as air."
Then as the eighth revolving moon arose
High o'er Jerusalem, and glancing filled
With argent rays the spot retired where now
The still devoted followers of their Lord
Poured forth their consecrated vows, appeared
Again the glorious Being, but with look
Of mild reproach on doubting Thomas fixed.
" Behold," he cries, " and touch these wounded hands
That on the cross once bled for human sin,
And press this side whose warm pulsation tells

The breathing heart, that beats with ceaseless love
To lost mankind which through this ghastly rent
Poured its last life blood, as a fountain pure
To cleanse *thy* deep defilement. Banish then
Distrust and doubting from thine anxious breast,
And with the confidence of faith repose
Here on thy risen Lord, who once was dead,
But now triumphant lives through endless years.”
O’erpowered, and filled with reverential love,
Low at his feet the penitent adores,
And owns Immanuel’s sacred presence there,
Exclaiming as he bends, “my Lord, my God!”
“Because thou hast beheld with mortal eye
And proved with mortal touch, thou hast believed;
Supremely blessed are they whose heaven-born faith
Untaught by evidence of sense relies,
And owns unseen, their Saviour and their God.”
Soon on the heights of lofty Galilee
Before a wondering multitude appears

The Lord of glory, robed in human guise
And when the sunny orb had swiftly traced
Full many an arch diurnal o'er the sphere
Terrestrial, to the mount of Bethany
He leads the ardent train, whose mental thought
Turns with emotion from th' approaching hour :
“ Depart not from Judea's capital,
But wait ye there Jehovah's promised grace,
Whose glorious spirit winged with sacred fire
Shall rest inspiring on each favoured soul !
For John with pure symbolic wave baptised,
But ye shall feel the dews of heaven descend
In copious streams of new-creating power,
To form each heart with energy divine.”
“ Lord”—they exclaim, “ and will thy gracious hand
Now break the foreign bondage from our neck
And raising abject Israel from the dust
Restore her wealth—her dignity—her crown ?”
With eye upraised their Lord benignly spake—

“ The times and seasons of th’ Almighty King
Writ in the heavenly archives, are unknown
To mind created—wrapt in mystery
They lie beyond the reach of mortal sight,
Nor may ye search the dark and hidden page.
But know, that gifted by the Spirit’s grace
Throughout the utmost bounds of Palestine,
And in the distant regions of the globe
Ye shall exalt the standard of the truth,
And loud proclaim your loved Immanuel’s name.
Yes—go ye wide throughout the peopled earth,
And preach undaunted by opposing powers
The free—the glorious Gospel—let each soul
Hear the glad tidings of immortal bliss
Through Jesu’s righteousness and dying love.
Sound ye the lofty trumpet through the world,
’Till its glad echoes reach the furthest shores,
And circle round this vast terrestrial sphere !
He that believeth and baptised receives

This saving truth, released from endless death—

The dread desert of sin—shall rise to joys

Unfading in the Paradise of God.

But he, whose mind by Satan's influence swayed,

Rejects the cleansing blood on Calvary shed,

When the last judgment's great tribunal sits,

Condemned to chains of darkness and of death,

The flame undying and corrosive worm—

Through an eternity of wo shall bear

The wrath tremendous of offended God.

Baptise ye in the Father's hallowed name,

The Son and Holy Spirit, while these signs

As sacred pledges of the truth shall mark

Its source Almighty ; they that now believe

Invested with bright superhuman powers

And gifts miraculous, shall shine on earth

With beams reflected from their Saviour's light,

And deck as brilliant stars the vault above.

And lo ! in spirit still I rest on earth

And bear you on my heart, 'till the last hour
When earth's material glories fade, and Time
Beneath Jehovah's fiat shall expire."

Then as he raised with love ineffable
His sacred hands in benediction sweet,
And glanced a farewell smile of heavenly light
On those who gazed, with deep emotion filled;
Sudden an azure cloud descending wraps
Its folds of lucid drapery round his form,
Upraised with gradual flight he mounts the skies
And vanishes in soft and viewless air!

Entranced and motionless—in wonder lost
Towards the blue concave as they raptured fix
Their gaze of ecstasy—two forms divine
Address in gentle tones th' admiring group:—
“Ye men of Galilee—why thus intent
Dwell ye on yon bright arch with look amazed?
This glorious Saviour who ascends on high,
Enwreathed with crowns celestial shall return,

And shine with sun-like radiance o'er the earth.
Then shall the nations own his mighty name,
And hymn his conquests in unceasing songs,
When the rich stream of plenteous grace shall pour
Its sparkling waters o'er this arid world,
And in the wilderness, the blooms of spring
Shall spread immortal verdure o'er the boundless plains!"

THE LAMENT OF DAVID OVER SAUL AND JONATHAN.

O Israel ! on thy lofty mountain's height
Expires the lustre fair of beauty's ray,
There fell the mighty in th' embattled fight,
And low on earth lie mouldering in decay !

Hush ye, in Gath, the victor-trumpet's sound,
Or bid its shrill and warlike melody
Change into requiems, and breathe around
In funeral lament, sorrow's mournful sigh.

Hush ye, in Gath, the victor-trumpet's sound,
Lest the uncircumcised Philistine boast,
Recount his deeds of martial prowess round
And tell whose conquered arm Gilboa lost.

O Israel's daughters ! weep with soul-felt grief,
Your monarch slain, who oft in glitt'ring arms,
Fought in the ranks of war, a peerless chief,
And decked with rich array your blooming charms.

Ill-fated Saul ! amid the sanguine slain,
Thy dying moan sinks on the heedless breeze,
Thy frowning brow^e bespeaks the mental pain
That rent thy spirit in its agonies.

O Saul, O Jonathan, how nobly shone
Your manly beauty and illustrious fame !
Now like a dream whose bright illusion's flown,
Nought rests to sorrowing memory, save their name.

Oh, thou more dear than brother to my heart—
Thou much loved Jonathan, how deeply sinks
My cureless wo, which like a poison'd dart
My spirit's life-blood from its fountain drinks.

O dark Gilboa! let no dews distil,
Nor genial rains to cheer thy parched field,
Let barrenness o'erspread thy gloomy hill,
Nor there let smiling spring its flow'rets yield.

O Israel! on thy lofty mountain's height
Expires the lustre fair of beauty's ray,
There fell the mighty in the embattled fight,
And low on earth lie mouldering in decay!

LIFE—A VAPOUR.

"FOR THE WIND PASSETH OVER IT, AND IT IS GONE, AND THE
PLACE THEREOF SHALL KNOW IT NO MORE."

Mark you yon flower, whose crimson dyes
Glow in the noon-tide's sunny ray,
Before the evening star arise
Its day of life shall pass away.

Seest thou that bird of brilliant plume,

Through azure fields he proudly flies—

But ah ! the shaft that seals his doom,

Now rends the air—he falls—he dies !

Behold yon fabric's glitt'ring walls

Whose Parian column mocks the snow,

Successive monarchs graced its halls,

Whose dust unhonored lies below.

The rich and jewelled diadem

That sparkled on their lofty brow,

With every bright and kingly gem

Recals their dying glories now.

See too those soft embowered groves,

Where youth appears in radiance drest,

There the destroying conqueror roves,

And strews the flowers on earth's cold breast.

Slow o'er life's dial moves the shade—

Yet is the hour of sunset nigh—

Seek then that world where joys ne'er fade,

Where deathless light illumines the sky.

THE EVENING MEDITATION.

Why if through yonder lonely grove

At eve in thought I silent rove,

Does the sweet stillness of the scene

Shed o'er my soul a joy serene ?

Why do those fading tints of light,

That dim the landscape from my sight,

Those twilight hues of varied flowers,

Sooth with soft calm my mental powers ?

Say is it, that the restless din,
The riot, and the rage of sin,
The gay parade, the vain display,
Steal not the hurried thought away ?

It is that here the still small voice,
Bids the believing soul rejoice,
And whispers through the echoing grove
This glorious truth, that God is love.

Love, as creation's Architect,
Who built the world, the heavens decked,
Love as the providential Lord
Upholding nature with his word.

But oh, his love in that vast scheme,
He formed lost sinners to redeem ;
Soars to immeasurable height
Above the reach of mortal sight.

Wake then the loud harmonious lyre,
Whose tones can purest joys inspire,
Attune its cords to heavenly love,
Theme of the sacred choir above.

And hovering o'er the sounding string,
Let the bright dove on halcyon wing,
The glooms of earthly sorrow chase,
And breathe of peace thro' Jesu's grace.

THE CONTRAST.—STORM AND CALM.

The spirit of the tempest rides abroad,
A wreath of light'ning flashes round his brow;
His sable car along the heaven-ward road
Rends with its thundering wheels the plains below.

The howling winds, his dreaded heralds, fly
In fierce chaotic tumult thro' the air,
Then moaning in the hollow mountains, die,
Or from their caves the slumbering echoes tear.
The ocean trembling at his giant form,
Whirls its rough billows to the turbid clouds,
While the torn vessel reeling 'mid the storm,
'Whelms beneath foaming surge its scatter'd shrouds.
From his Atlantean shape disordered flies,
His mantle wild, and shades the starry skies.

* * * * *

The stormy spirit's past—celestial calm
Descends from yon pure space where opes the sky,
Her braided hair entwined with verdant balm
Which dropping, gems her robe of purest dye.
She leads the raging winds by suasive power,
Down to their coral caves beneath the sea,
Then noiseless treads the clear cerulean floor,
Whose waves abashed her gentle pressure flee.

And lo! her radiant smile illumines the air,
And o'er the heavens its bright reflection throws,
The meads a fresher grace and fragrance wear,
And deeper blushes paint th' enamoured rose.
While choirs unseen from earth, and air, and sea,
Resound her praise in mystic harmony.

SPRING.

See where the blushing Spring, with modest air
In humid wreath and robe of palest green,
Walks from yon wintry forest—while her hair
Yet shines with spangled frosts and dew-drops sheen.
See, at her kindling glance the vapours fly,
The flowers upspring and ope th' expanding bloom,
The wakening zephyrs with their softest sigh,
Hovering around, inhale her sweet perfume.

With gentle hand she frees the ice-bound floods,
And guides them thro' the mead and arching grove,
Then hangs on each lone bough her snowy buds,
And tunes the plumed choir to notes of love.
Her soft enchantment lulls the rising storm,
And wakes with magic power each latent charm.

SUMMER.

The fervid Airs on wings of golden beams
Chace the retreating Spring, while from bright horn
Now joyous Summer pours effulgent streams
Of mingled clouds to deck the robe of morn.
The blooming nymphs that form his graceful train
Fling from clear urns, the iridescent flowers,
And sprinkle with rich light the azure main,
Whose undulations court the sparkling showers.

Then while his chaplet of o'erpowering rays,
Flames with its fires intense—the lovely hours
Seek out some shade obscure where softly strays
The lucid rivulet, 'neath pensile bowers,
While echo sounds her ever-varying shell,
And Fancy breathes her soul-entrancing spell.

A U T U M N.

In brilliant robe of varied hue appears
Autumn with mantle dipped in sunshine bright,
And 'neath her lustre rich the landscape wears
The deep suffusion of the solar light.
Now as she strays where bends each clust'ring bough
By Summer hung with crude and vapid fruit,
Her mystic touch imparts the blushing glow,
And mellow sweetness to each loaded shoot.

Then wandering near the expansive fields of corn
That scarcely wave beneath the tranquil breeze,
Her gilded shadow by the meadows worn,
Embrowns the hills and deepens on the trees.
Around—the flutt'ring hours on purple wing,
O'er her gay robes the latest flow'rets fling.

WINTER.

While Autumn musing walks the shadowy grove,
She hears the lonely whispers of the breeze
And leaves the scene, as Winter wildly roves,
And sweeps the golden foliage from the trees.
O'er his dark brow an icy diadem,
Shines 'neath the tearful glances of the sun,
While his cold sceptre starred with frosty gem,
Sways with dread power, the conquest he has won.

Soon as he flies o'er each cerulean fount,
His withering presence chills the glassy floor,
And when his wings expanding shade the mount,
Their snowy plumage falls in frigid shower.
Unwilling the pale hours attend his flight,
And murmuring sigh for Spring's ethereal light.

HYMN.

O source of good ! whose forming hand
Strewed o'er the heaven's illumined strand,
Those sparkling spheres—like sands of gold—
Which thy majestic power unfold.

Before primeval beauty sprang
From chaos deep—ere thou didst hang
Those lamps of purest amber bright,
Beneath yon dome of lucid light :

Thy *Wisdom*—vast almighty mind
Ere time—ere nature's birth, designed
Redemption's great immortal scheme
Where shines thy *Love's* unequalled beam.

Then *Justice* bowed beneath thy sway,
Hope smiled with brighter, livelier ray,
Joy struck his lyre's enraptured strings,
And *Mercy* waved her angel wings.

Illumed by thy celestial flame,
Let sinners hail the Saviour's name,
And in yon world of heavenly calm
Receive the victor's fadeless palm.

NOTES.

NOTES.

SAUL.

Note ^a—page 4, line 16.

“ She sought the influence dark of demons fell.”

Many elaborate arguments have been written to prove the existence as well as non-existence of demoniacal influence ; without searching into the controversy, a few remarks on the subject may be necessary in this place. The religion of every idolatrous nation, from that of the ancient Egyptians to every varying form of modern heathenism, has embodied different systems of magic and sorcery, which have obtained almost universally ; and it is remarkable that this belief has prevailed equally among the refined and philosophical Greeks and Romans, as in later times among the savage nations of the Asiatic, African, and American Continents.

The philosophy of Pythagoras and Plato, was interwoven with demonology, and the Poets and Historians of other times abound with professions of the same belief. The Jewish oracle was undoubtedly intended to point out to mankind the vast difference between the clear manifestations of the Divine will as revealed there, and the dark and dubious answers, with respect to futurity, delivered in the heathen temples to those who consulted their occult oracles.

In the sacred writings this subject is not treated in an argumentative way, but the simple and positive denunciations against necromancy contained in the Old Testament, and the demoniacal possessions related in the New, afford, perhaps, as strong an evidence of the reality of this species of diabolical influence, as could be given by a plain de-

claration of its truth. The nature of the communication between magicians and demons must remain a mystery; but the manner in which they sought that communication was generally by the sacrifice of various victims, and the study of certain volumes, which, like the books of the Sybil, have never been clearly ascertained.

In the Acts of the Apostles it is recorded as an evidence of the faith of some converts to Christianity, who had used curious arts, that they brought their books and destroyed them—thus publicly renouncing the whole system of sorcery and divination, and bearing an open testimony to the religion of our Lord Jesus Christ. It may be demanded of those who, “not ignorant of his devices,” admit the reality of Satan’s power in a *spiritual* sense, on what ground do they consider as improbable his influence upon the imagination and senses of unbelievers, “who lie in the wicked one—the ruler of the darkness of this world?” In connection with this subject, the declaration of our blessed Lord, “I saw Satan as lightening fall from heaven,” opens to our view that glorious period, when the permissive power of the evil one shall cease for ever, and God in Christ shall reign throughout eternity.

Note^b—page 8, line 2.

“And lo! an aged form in sable pall.”

It is evident, that although the witch purposed deceiving the senses of Saul by some magical delusion, yet that on the appearance of the spirit, she was much alarmed, perceiving him to be indeed the true Samuel. Some writers have conjectured that the phantom was not a beatified soul, but an evil spirit who had assumed the form of Samuel. But the declaration of the inspired writer that it was truly Samuel, who addressed the abject King of Israel, (1 Sam. xxviii. 14—20) as well as the professed devotedness of the spirit to that God who had sent him to proclaim the Monarch’s doom, (16, 17 verses) render such a supposition irreconcilable with Divine truth. The sorceress was undoubtedly not in possession of any power to recall the spirits of the dead; but as a manifestation of God’s displeasure against Saul for his disobedience, the departed Prophet appears to have been sent at that awful moment, to declare the message of Jehovah.

Note ^c—page 10, line 12.

“ And in judicial clouds obscures my way.”

It was highly natural that Saul should attempt to justify himself for acting in violation of the command of God, who declared—“ A man also, or woman that hath a familiar spirit, or that is a wizard, shall surely be put to death : they shall stone them with stones : their blood shall be upon them.” And that he should desire to exonerate himself in the sight of Samuel, whose aid he anxiously sought. It was also true that he had applied by various means to Jehovah for instruction and assistance in his emergency, but not seeking *by faith*, (for it is manifest that he had never been converted,) his petition was unanswered.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR.

Note ^d—page 40, line 1.

“ In its proud head of pure and burning gold.”

In the interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, the reader will recognise the views of Bishop Newton, in his discourses on the Prophecies. Perhaps no image could be found more strikingly calculated to illustrate the facts it was intended to foreshow, than that which was presented to the view of the King of Chaldea. The Assyrian state in its monarchy and splendor was aptly represented by the head of gold ; the Medo-Persian Kingdom at first a binarchy, and inferior in wealth to the Assyrian Empire, was clearly displayed by the breasts of silver, as' was also the Macedonian in its strength, and the warlike disposition of the nation, by the brazen body, which was afterwards divided on the death of Alexander the Great. The Roman Empire was plainly exhibited in its power and primitive simplicity, by the legs of iron, which, perhaps, have reference to its kingly and republican governments. Its subsequent decline, the decay of public and private virtue, the growth of faction and its dependance upon foreign mercenaries for the support of its dominion, appear evident by the union of the miry clay with the feet of iron. Of these states it may

be said, as in modern times has been observed of Charles the Twelfth of Sweden, they

—"Left a name at which the world turned pale,
To paint a moral or adorn a tale."

The Messiah, "the stone of Israel," by unearthly power, has overthrown these heathen kingdoms, leaving not a vestige of their former grandeur. The Christian looks forward with joyful anticipation to that happy period when this stone shall become a great mountain and fill the whole earth, and when the adoring nations, under the powerful influence of the Gospel, shall exclaim unitedly, "come and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord our God."

BELSHAZZAR.

Note ^f—page 58, line 8.

"And crowned with myrtle by the rosy hours."

It appears that though the Phenicians in their worship of the sun had their views particularly directed to Baal-Peor, that this latter was invoked by the Chaldeans under the title of Mars. It will, however, be recollected, that the sun, moon, and the Goddess Venus, were particularly adored throughout the Assyrian Empire.

MARRIAGE OF CANA.

Note ^g—page 111, line 16.

"And none remained to grace the sumptuous feast."

To the generality of readers, it will be unnecessary to observe, that nuptial feasts among the Jews were continued for the period of seven days, during which time there was often a succession of guests. This will therefore account for the circumstance of the wine having failed before the expiration of the entertainment.



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